AZEMIA,

A NOVEL:

CONTAINING

IMITATIONS OF THE MANNER, BOTH IN PROSE AND VERSE, OF MANY OF THE AUTHORS OF THE PRESENT DAY;

WITH

POLITICAL STRICTURES.

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

THE SECOND EDITION.

Fair views and beauteous prospects I invent,
Pines, poplars, ruins, rocks, and sentiment;
Fond lovers sigh beneath my vines and larches,
While ghosts glide grimly grave through glimmering arches.

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AZEMIA.

CHAPTER I.

He is a man, take him for all in all,
We ne'er ſhall look upon his like again.

SHAKESPEARE.

"YET ſo ſaid Timothy Twaddle—that good, faithful, excellent old ſervant, Timothy Twaddle, told me that ſhe loved."

Such was the ſoliloquy of the Rev. Solomon Sheeppen, meditating on Azemia's diſappearance, as he *galloped ventre à terre* between Royſton and London. A turnpike gate ſuddenly intercepted his dangerous career; but ſuch was the agitation of his mind (for which a flying leap has often proved a ſpecific), that he was on the point of taking it—when the turnpike man, Walter Waglock, who was ſettling a point about a diſputed three-pence half-penny (with Jack Jerkin, a poſt-boy at the Angel at Royſton), ſtepped forward, for he took Mr. Sheeppen for a highwayman; when ſuddenly recollecting him, for he had known him ever ſince he was an under graduate, he ſaid,

" Good

"Good lack! why, what is the matter with you, Reverend Sir?—Leap over ſuch a turnpike-gate as this here?—Why, Lord! it would go nigh to break your neck."

Sheeppen now perceiving Waglock, ſaid in a ſaint voice, "Take your money, Maſter Walter, and let me paſs: I have not a moment to loſe." He ſpoke in a voice of extreme ſenſibility.

The turnpike man would probably have been affected even to tears had he heard him, but he was prevented by the extreme jingling of the Newmarket waggon that moment approaching. Sheeppen ſtruck, however, his horſe, and purſued his journey, in a diſpoſition of mind hard to be deſcribed, to-

wards Enfield ; — then gently galloping, and more tardily trotting, through Edmonton, he paſſed the ever-memorable ſign of the Bell, where he gave a ſentimental ſigh to the gayer adventures of John Gilpin, envying his celebrity, while he regretted the days that were gone, when the involuntary excurſion to Ware of the juſtly-celebrated linen-draper could enwreathe his cheeks with a ſmile.

" It is not ſo *now*," ſaid he: " Love, unhappy love, has obſcured all my proſpects, and blighted the bloomy bloſſoms of benevolent beatitude. In vain for me now would be all the luxuriant luſciouſneſs of laviſh nature. Though the ſun ſhould diffuſe its moſt *ſplendid* glories over the *grateful* bosom

bosom of the *humid* earth, and the *moist-eyed* moon should melt in her *mellifluous* meridian: though *wild* geese, or even wild *ducks*, teal, and widgeon, should glide glittering over the gay and *gauzy* water, *begemmed* with lilies, and reflecting the weeping willow whispering over its waving way: though easterlings, or even coots and dabchicks, should sweep its lucid surface with their enamelled pinions; and though dulcet music of mountain breezes, and hollow sounds of falling cascades, should unite to whisper delicate dreams of dawning delight!—all! all would be in vain! — Even the distant prospect of Winchmore Hill, hiding its *blue* head in the severing clouds that float in feathery festoons — the citizens in their whiskeys—the lower ranks in their plea-

ſure carts — even directors and rich merchants in their handſome coaches, *bounding* and *friſking* along theſe well-kept roads, that lead the amuſed eye towards Newington and Kingſland on one ſide; on the other, diverging towards Clapton, Homerton, and Hackney: the intermingling notes of woodland melody, from the flower-beſprinkled hedge-rows; all preſenting a picture, exquiſitely ſublime, yet ſoothe not the ſad ſoul of Solomon Sheeppen! Alas! *he* feels that nothing *can* ſoothe it, or betray it a moment from the contemplation of the graces of Azemia: ſhe has indeed

"Murdered ſleep."

Thus ſaying, he turned his horſe to the left, determining, though he knew not why,

why, to take the Hackney road to London; but when he reached the Mermaid (celebrated in political annals for Middlesex meetings), he felt himself so entirely overcome by a sense of his lost happiness, that he was compelled to enter, and call for a dish of poached eggs.

While he waited for this refreshment, he took up, in that careless way one does at an inn, a newspaper that lay on the window seat: it was the Sun—a paper remarkable for disinterested candour and ungarbled simplicity of narrative, as well as for the elegant purity of its English, and the admirable accuracy of its translations from that language become *so* detestable from the *existing circumstances* of the na-

tion which ſpeaks it, that it is *toaſted againſt* by ſome of the moſt *manly* and *unblemiſhed* characters of *modern old England.*

He gazed moſt lackadaiſically upon it, "unknowing what he ſought," till the poetry, always ſo taſtefully ſelected, attracted his attention: that which immediately preſented itſelf was a Sonnet—it was of the melancholy caſt—it was pathetic — it was touching—it was appropriate—and it vibrated for a moment on all the ſtrings and ſources of ſympathetic ſenſibility, as Mr. Sheeppen read thus:

SONNET

SONNET

TO DARKNESS.

Oh! Darkneſs! hide me with thine ebon ray*,
And let thy brown ſhade o'er my boſom drop,
Guard my ſad boſom from the torch of day,
And bid thy chills my hurrying pulſes ſtop;
While in thy glimmering gloom I gladly wrap
My temples, and attune the ſoul-ſad lay!
Reclining on the meadow's breathing crop
Of bos-befriending † flower-beſprinkled hay;

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* A *ray* of darkneſs is a new image; at leaſt I recollect only two modern poets who uſe it. It gives me an idea ſo perfectly obſcure, that I perſuade myſelf it is what Milton means by darkneſs viſible.

† "Bos-befriending." The Italian ſcholar will know how to appreciate this expreſſive compound epithet. It is hardly neceſſary to explain it, even to female readers.

Or 'neath the verdant ſhade of cypreſs ſtop,
To hear ſweet Philomel ſalute the May.
Come, gentle Darkneſs, in thy veil of jet
Enwreathe me, votary of the moiſt-eyed muſe!
So in thy raven robe I may forget
Pearlina *! and drink deep oblivious dews.

The congeniality of the ſentiment reconciled our clerical wanderer for once, to what he had, on ſo many occaſions, and particularly in his diſputes with Iphaniſſa, deſcribed as the ſenſeleſs ſuavity of ſentimental ſimplicity, or the piping plaintiveneſs of parading pathos. Beſides, this being a legitimate ſonnet,

* Pearlina is a name derived from pearls, applicably applied as a comparative and an emendative either to the ſkin or the teeth of the Fair. The Italians have ſeveral names derived from gems; as Diamantina—Opalina, for a capricious beauty, &c.

and

and upon the Italian model, it was, he owned, a ſhade, a degree better and more claſſical than the poetic baſtards obtruded upon the public taſte, "even to ſatiety." Scarce had he finiſhed this internal critique, when rouſing himſelf from the weak indulgence of the enervating paſſion of love, he ate his eggs with an appetite worthy of a curate who has ſerved five churches; then called for ſome more newſpapers to amuſe his mind from the ſad ſubject of his contemplations, while he digeſted them. All his love-enwoven thoughts, and even the bright image of Azemia, faded from his recollection as he read the following animated Ode in another of the conſtellation of *Suns* that were brought to him, and recognized the elegant and ſpirited hand of his long-eſteemed

friend, and ſome time fellow ſtudent, Mr. Paridel Puffwell, now an Under Secretary of State.

ODE, PANEGYRICAL AND LYRICAL.

TO THE TUNE OF HOSIER'S GHOST.

YE, who places hold, or penſions,
And as much as ye can get,
Come, and hear the praiſing mention
I ſhall make of Miſter Pitt.

All he does is grand and daring,
All he ſays is right and fit;
Never let us then be ſparing
In the praiſe of Miſter Pitt.

Who, like him, can prate down reaſon*,
Who ſo well on taxes hit?
Who detect a plot of treaſon
Half ſo well as Miſter Pitt?

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* Not reaſon according to the vulgar acceptation of the word, but falſe reaſoning founded on democratic data, which is of courſe no reaſon at all. The word occurs here merely for the *rhythm*.

He's

He's the man to make these nations
Own their millions of debit—
Well incurr'd, as prove orations
Duly made by Mister Pitt.

That he's prov'd a great financier,
'Tis as true as holy writ;
He's a *rate* and *duty fancier* *,
Heaven-born tax-man—Mister Pitt.

Opposition try to hurt him,
Only in his place to sit;
Let *us* not, my friends, desert him,
Stick ye close to Mr. Pitt.

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* Certain mechanics some years ago formed themselves into inoffensive associations, called Fanciers' clubs: some were pigeon fanciers, some felt emulation about the feathered properties of canary birds. Happy times! happy men! when *sedition fancying* was unknown, and no man dreaded the Mum Acts. Much are such employments to be recommended.——*Note by Mr. Reeve.*

He

He the multitude is humbling,
  Britons that doth well befit:
Swiniſh crowds, who minds your grumbling?
  Bow the knee to Miſter Pitt.

Tho' abroad our men are dying,
  Why ſhould he his projects quit?
What are orphans, widows, crying,
  To our ſteady Miſter Pitt?

His is fortitude of mind, Sir:
  That remark do not omit;
He by Heaven was deſign'd, Sir,
  To humble England——Glorious Pitt!

You ne'er ſee him love a wench, Sir,
  Driving curricle and tit;
He attends the Treaſury-bench, Sir,
  Sober, honeſt, Miſter Pitt.

What cares he for Fox's raving,
  Or for Sherry's cauſtic wit?
Still the *nation* he keeps ſhaving,
  Pretty cloſe too——Miſter Pitt!

Two thirds of that nation ſtarving,
  Now of meat ne'er taſte a bit;
For his friends he ſtill is carving,
  This great ſtateſman—Miſter Pitt.

Miſter Pitt has elocution
  Greater far than John De Witt*;
Give up then our Conſtitution,
  As adviſes Miſter Pitt.

He *out-herods* Oppoſition,
  Heedleſs he of every ſkit†;
For the ſtate a rare phyſician,
  To bleed and ſweat, is Miſter Pitt.

Britons once were *too* victorious,
  And they love it too much yet;
Humility is far more glorious,
  As 'tis taught by Miſter Pitt.

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* A Dutchman, whoſe intentions were miſtaken, and who ſuffered unjuſtly from popular prejudice.

† A cant word for the paltry effuſions of party malice, exhibited at elections, &c.

Lo!

Lo! freſh millions he will raiſe, Sir,
Tho' we don't advance a whit;
Give him then imperial praiſe, Sir,
Viva viva Miſter Pitt!

Praiſe him, all ye Treaſury Genii!
— That he's wrong, Oh! ne'er admit;
Fear not Fox's honeſt keen-eye,
While ye ſtick to Miſter Pitt.

Laud him, Biſhops, Deans, and Prebends,
All by inſpiration lit;
Praiſe him, blue and crimſon ribands,
Knights! bepraiſe your patron Pitt.

Stretch your throats, ye fat Contractors,
He employs your pot and ſpit;
Laugh at impotent detractors,
Envying you and Miſter Pitt.

New-made Lords ſhall join the ſong, Sirs,
Nor will Roſe or Steele forget
To declaim, or right or wrong, Sirs,
In the praiſe of Miſter Pitt.

Oh!

Oh! berhyme him, courtly writers!
Nares and Gifford, men of wit;
Pye, and all ye ode-inditers,
Strike your lyres to Mifter Pitt!

Learn, each *Jacobin* Reviewer,
Analytical or Crit.;
Learn from *Britifh* Critics, truer,
To appreciate Mifter Pitt.

So a chorus fhall arife, Sir,
That the welkin's brows fhall hit;
Britons' joyous *grateful* cries, Sir,
Shall be heard thro' earth and fkies, Sir,
And the univerfe furprife, Sir,
In honour of the heaven-born Pitt *.

Struck with the truth and elevated fentiments of this admirable piece of poetry,

* In fome *low* Jacobin prints, which impertinently copied this *adulatory* ode, another verfe was foifted in,

poetry, Mr. Sheeppen (himſelf truly miniſterial from principle and conviction, and having been bred among the ſucceſsfully *booing* candidates for mitres, &c.) mounted his horſe, and animated with the genuine love of the good things of his country, he determined to wait on Dr. Prettyman, Biſhop of Lincoln, the very next day, to ſolicit a living in his gift, not far from Bugden; once more began galloping; and ſoon,

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in, worthy of the vulgar and dirty preſs it iſſued from—I print it merely to ſhew that it is ſurreptitious—it follows in thoſe diſcreditable papers, verſe 15.

Chatham's blood he is belying,
Teaching Britons to ſubmit;
But, perhaps the D—— flying
Might *produce* our Miſter Pitt.

without

without any farther accident, either from Cupid or any other markſman, found himſelf at his lodgings in Suffolk Street, near the Middleſex Hoſpital.

CHAP. II.

Yet when thy *wit* to my enraptur'd eyes,
In all its blazes of bright glory rise:
When with enchanting, novelty you charm,
With *error* please us, and with *truth* alarm;
With awe and wonder I observe thy plan,
And own that Freedom was not made for Man.

"BIRDS and beasts have all of them a method *whereby* to comprehend the mutual sympathy of amorous emotion, *somehow*—But even kings* and princes of

* Not all kings and princes; for the kings of Congo and Dahemy, nations of celebrity in Africa, are barbarous

of the human race are obliged to call in the assistance of scholarship in some degree; which is *so comical*, in order to know the tongue, and dialect, and conceits, look you, and notions, and the like (as my countryman Fluellen would say), of the Fair, whom they would address, before they can woo her.

"Now it has always struck me, that is to be lamented, considering the admirably brilliant things which our princes and kings, *in good time*, would say of their own accord in their native tongues, as our Princes of Wales used to do before the time of Edward the

barbarous enough to elect *their* wives from among their own subjects; whereas, if they sent for them, as ours do, beyond sea, they must be sure to acquire the *scholarship* in question.

First,

firſt, *as I remember.*—And though Balzac terms the ſtudies of foreign languages, the heavy luggage of antiquity, and Locke adviſes us to fill the mind with reflections; yet I ſtill think the art of raiſing aſparagus, as I ſaw it practiſed in 1788*, by one Pierre Le Choux, a gardener near Paſſy, a village in the vicinity of Paris, is preferable to the common mode adopted in our gardens: but Shakeſpeare, when he ſpeaks of Biron, in Love's Labour Loſt, deſcribes a truly faſcinating converſer: and the conſummate idler, who is determined to make too frequent a uſe of the favourite figure Aphæneſis, may amuſe himſelf by figura-

* Juſt on the eve of the dreadful revolution. It is a fact, that not a ſingle ſprout of this uſeful diuretic vegetable has ſince grown in that polluted atmoſphere.

tive

tive expreſſions, as I once ſaw in the *great deſort*, an Arab called " Mahyla Aſhog."

So ſpoke a lady at Mrs. Blandford's *converſazione*—A lady whoſe general knowledge does honour to human nature and to her ſex, and, above all, to the mountains where ſhe was fed by the nine Muſes (whoſe names ſhe would tell in a moment, but which I cannot ſtay to recollect, for my heroine waits for me)—which Muſes undoubtedly nouriſhed her with eclogue-iac, milk mingled with Hyblean honey. So ſpoke ſhe—and the learned, the lively, the acute all liſtened, for *her* converſe was indeed faſcinating; but at the moment ſhe named Mahyla Aſhog, Azemia ſtarted up, caught her hands, and burſt into tears.

" What

"What is the matter, my dear?" ſaid Mrs. Blandford, alarmed.

"Oh! Madam," cried Azemia in *ſpeechleſs* agony—"that Aſhog!—he was a ſervant of my father's, and I have heard my grandmother ſay"——"And what then?" ſaid Mr. Gallſtone, an old gentleman, who had not yet ſpoken—"Come, come, my pretty dear, let us not hear tales of thy grandmother.—Madam," reſumed he, turning ſternly towards Mrs. Blandford, "this young thing's head is filled with agglomerated carnoſities, generated by novels and romances.—Let her get a good cookery book if ſhe *will* read, and learn how to make the moſt proportionate puddings, and to boil them with the moſt attention to the adheſive qualities of the

oviparous

oviparous and lacteal ingredients. "Sir," continued he, addreſſing himſelf to Sir Baptiſt Bamboozle, who ſat by, "Sir, great abilities are not requiſite for cooks, yet man has been juſtly defined as a cooking animal.—I think Mrs. Glaſſe the firſt woman among them; imagination is not required in any part of the culinary ſcience—yet Hannah had great imagination. Sir, when I was at Pembroke College, I taſted a pot of marmalade of her manufacture, and its conſiſtence and ſuavity ſet her very high in my opinion."

To this all the company aſſented; but poor Azemia, who underſtood not one word of it, felt extremely diſtreſſed: ſhe would have given worlds, had ſhe poſſeſſed them, to have ſpoken to Mrs.

Albuzzi, the lady who had named (as having ſeen) this Mahyla Aſhog. But while Mr. Gallſtone ſtaid there was no pauſe in the converſation—loud, ſonorous, and ſententious, all he ſaid was attended to with eagerneſs, and aſſented to with complacency. At length, having a doſe of rhubarb and jalap to take that night, of which he failed not to inform Mrs. Albuzzi, he ſtalked away, and the converſation became more general.

While Dr. Proſe was telling a very long ſtory about Lord and Lady Laudanum, Azemia approached Mrs. Albuzzi, and, trembling as before the very meridian ſun of female information, ventured to aſk her to give ſome farther anecdotes of Aſhog.

"Oh,"

"Oh," cried the lady, "all I ſaid was merely *typical:* in fact, though I might have ſeen this perſon, and my imagination is ſo lively that I almoſt could fancy I did—as Louis the Ninth, you remember, ſaid to his Almoner—while, in our days, liberty claims a more poſitive ſignification, and ſeems to imply an original grant, a ſemi-barbarous, ſemi-ſocial ſtate, like that of the Tartar nations, who live by rapine and ſubſiſt in wandering hordes, "their hand againſt every man, and every man's hand againſt them," as was *promiſed*, you know, my dear, to your progenitor Iſhmael."

Azemia, now totally diſcouraged, was going to the other end of the room, leaving this very erudite lady to con

tinue her admirable, though ſomewhat deſultory animadverſions in men and things; when ſhe was arreſted in her courſe by a group of gentlemen and ladies ſurrounding a languiſhing fair one, who with head reclined, and doing *her poſſible* to raiſe a bluſh—ſat, or rather leaned, on a ſopha in a moſt becoming attitude, and looked down, as, in compliance with the entreaties of her friends, ſhe repeated ſlow, yet ſweet, in a *penſive* voice, the following

ELEGIAC SONNET

TO A MOPSTICK.

Straight remnant, of the ſpiry birchen bough,
That o'er the ſtreamlet wont perchance to quake
Thy many twinkling leaves, and, bending low,
Beheld thy white rind dancing on the lake—

How

How doth thy preſent ſtate, poor ſtick! awake
My pathos—for, alas! even ſtript as thou
May be my beating breaſt, if e'er forſake
Philiſto this poor heart; and break his vow.

So muſing on I fare, with many a ſigh,
And meditating then on times long paſt,
To thee, lorn pole! I look with tearful eye,
As all beſide the floor-ſoil'd pail thou'rt caſt,
And my ſad thoughts, while I behold thee twirl'd,
Turn on the twiſtings of this troublous world *.

While theſe things were paſſing in Margaret-Street, Cavendiſh-Square, where Mrs. Blandford had taken a houſe for three months, Mr. Sheeppen little thought how near ſhe was to him; but, indeed, had he been aware of it,

* The reader of taſte cannot but recollect the very moral and affecting meditation on a broom-ſtick, which perhaps ſuggeſted this idea to the *fair author*.

as he was now in ſearch of preferment, he muſt have checked the ebullitions of his paſſion, as Mrs. Albuzzi * would ſay, "*ſomehow*;" for a Clergyman of the Church of England to marry a Mahomedan, would be "*ſo comical*, I think;" for (would ſhe probably add), "cranes and wild geeſe obey a leader, and reject not ſubordination, which is paid to *him* who has the longeſt genealogy †."

* Let not faſtidious critics object to this ſecond mention of Mrs. Albuzzi. There is in her manner and her writings a continual corruſcation of catching lights, which irradiate every prominent point of intellect, and ſuddenly enable us to ſeize on a chain, a link, a concatenation of ideas, which we never ſhould perceive if left to ourſelves.

† Vide Britiſh Synonymy, and other admirable works.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Laugh then at any but at fools or foes,
These you may anger, but you mend not those:
Laugh at *your friends*; and if your friends are sore,
So much the better—you may laugh the more.

POPE.

AZEMIA, now every day improving, became infinitely dear to Mrs. Blandford. There was to the observing and reflecting mind of that excellent lady something particularly interesting in marking the development of the human intellect, which, till its seventeenth sum-

mer, had been in a ſtate of infantine ignorance, and on which the light of knowledge had burſt at once.

Inſenſibly the attention ſhewn to her fair protegée induced Mrs. Blandford, though on very different motives from thoſe which had actuated Miſs Ironſide, to conquer that diſlike to public places, and more general ſociety, which had originated in diſappointment and ſorrow. Azemia ſoon became an object of admiration, as the beautiful Turkiſh girl; and on her account, rather than on that of her own ſuperior intelligence, Mrs. Blandford found her company ſought by almoſt all the literary, and ſome few of the faſhionable world.

Among

Among thoſe who moſt earneſtly ſolicited her acquaintance was Mrs. Quackly, the widow of an eminent phyſician, who lived on a very handſome jointure in a very handſome houſe in Soho Square, where ſhe made a point of receiving all thoſe who were eminent in the world, whether for literary acquirements or any other notoriety. Here the actor had an opportunity of ſtudying his author—and the muſical performer aſſociated with the affluent amateur—the mineralogiſt and the botaniſt might compare their diſcoveries; and the projector explain his ſchemes for the benefit of the world, to the idle man of faſhion (who was received only becauſe his *name* was flattering to the vanity of Mrs. Quackly), and who cared not if that

world held nothing but the objects immediately gratifying to himſelf.

Here, with an infinite variety of odd perſonages, were ſome who ſeemed fallen among them, hardly knowing how, by a ſtrange perverſeneſs of deſtiny; and of theſe *Mr. Hillary* was ſoon diſtinguiſhed by Mrs. Blandford. His perſon was (though large, and rather what is called heavy) remarkably handſome: he had a countenance ſo attractive, and a voice and manner ſo faſcinating, to thoſe whom he thought it worth his while to pleaſe, that it was impoſſible to be on one's guard againſt the ſeduction of his converſation. Mrs. Blandford was the firſt to be ſenſible of its charm: there was a ſort of reluctant gaiety about him which ſeemed to be the effect of philoſophy combating diſappointment,

appointment, that ſuited her feelings particularly; and after meeting him frequently at Mrs. Quackly's, ſhe had given him a general invitation to her own houſe, where he often viſited, paying her much of that attention which is at any age flattering, and often ſhewing her in confidence ſpecimens of thoſe poetical talents which began to make ſome noiſe in *the world*.

He was one day preſent when Mrs. Albuzzi was diſcourſing on the various meanings of the words folly, fatuity, ideotiſm; and ſaying, that the flexibility of temper, which is uſually called weakneſs, may be driven very eaſily to ideotiſm: "As," ſaid the *lively lady*, "I once ſaw a rich trader preſent a conjuring chemiſt with a hundred pounds,

only for telling him, that if he would grind his cochineal finer, it would go farther; and a lad, paſt fifteen years old, perſuaded to *burn his fiddle*, becauſe," ſaid his playmates, " there is a new diſcovery now, that fiddle-aſhes ſell for a crown an ounce—as there is nothing elſe found out ſo certain a cure for the dropſy. We call this," continued ſhe, " the power of making *fools* of the *people*; and truly do we call it ſo, when mankind are willing to be duped between *deluſion* and *colluſion* ſo far, that they are contented to bury themſelves chin deep in earth . . . . . ."

" Enough, enough, dear Madam," interrupted Mr. Hillary, " you ſay very juſtly; but never, oh! never confine your remarks in this manner to *retail*

tail inſtances, when you may give a wholeſale and ſublime example of a whole nation. We ſee before our eyes a wiſe and provident people made ſuch fools of by this *deluſion* and *colluſion*, that they have burnt their fiddle, fiddle-ſtick, caſe, and all, and are contented to bury themſelves chin deep in debt, from which it is impoſſible they can ever emerge—at the ſuggeſtion of a State Charlatan, who, though regularly bred, and adhering to what is falſely called regular practice, has ſo miſtaken the *caſe*, that by dabbling in preventives, for which there was no occaſion, he has brought on conſtipations and ruptures that muſt utterly deſtroy the conſtitution."

The lady's eyes flaſhed fire as indignantly ſhe looked at her old acquaintance:

ance: ſcorn and anger mingled on her brow, while ſhe exclaimed, "And it is thus, *in good time*, that perſons who have degraded and debaſed themſelves by their profligacy, and diſſipated their fortunes, have recourſe to *levelling* ſchemes, *I think*; ſo that *their* apoſtacy really *frights* one. *Such* a man we all agree to loath, *I believe*, and, with one conſent, deteſt his conduct, while we abhor his principles."

Mrs. Blandford, who had no idea of the violent party paſſions that boiled in the boſom of Mrs. Albuzzi, ſaw her with ſo much diſlike thus give way to them, that ſhe was very glad when ſhe roſe and flounced away; while the gentlemanly calmneſs of Mr. Hillary intereſted her ſtill more in his favour.

He

He ſeemed unwilling to dwell on the foibles of Mrs. Albuzzi, while he ſpoke highly of her abilities; "which really," ſaid he, "are very uncommon, though rendered ſometimes diſadvantageous, and even ridiculous, by vanity and affectation. But when we remember how *few* of the people who talk about knowledge know any thing, let us allow this extraordinary woman to inſult us a little with her violent pretenſions. Think, my dear Madam, how much more general her knowledge is, and how much more cultivation her mind has received, than the men who paſs for ſcholars, or fine writers. She would make, for example, much better verſes than the Duke, poor man! who has been flattered into fancying it is neceſſary for Mæcenas to ſhew he can practiſe the art he patroniſes;

and

and ſo makes charades, and writes prologues without even the leaſt ray of poetry, and with almoſt as little common ſenſe. And then there's Blow-up, the ci-devant dealer in combuſtibles, who has for theſe twenty or thirty years fatigued the ears of play-going people with his miſerable, vulgar, and ſenſeleſs flippancies, by way of epilogues, which he really thinks are ſuperior to thoſe of Garrick and Sheridan, and loves to announce to the public, as 'coming from his pen,' at the earneſt entreaty of the author of the comedy. Then there is poor Jerrygum, a ſentimental writer, who pipes out moſt pathetic pieces of imaginary miſery, and ſings them to his own harp, for all the world like Scriblerus, when he incontinently ſnatched his *little Lyra*, and in extreme diſhabille

went

went forth into the balcony to ſtill the indecent contention of two Dames de la Halle of thoſe days, who were ſcolding in the ſtreet :—only inſtead of being *ſans culottes*, or *ſans* any other appendage of a Catholic Chriſtian, he ſits with all imaginable pathos in a pair of inexpreſſibles '*couleur de roſe.*' Then only recollect our acquaintance Fitz-Jumbling, who has written in verſe a folio hiſtory of Rome, ſomething in this ſtyle :

Reader! in this ſhort ſketch 'twould not beſeem us
To ſay too much of Romulus or Remus;
Nor to extend the long hiſtoric page,
With telling of their birth and parentage;
Or how from wolves they got their education,
Which made them founders of the Roman nation.

" My

"My good friend," exclaimed Mrs. Blandford, "tell me, I beſeech you, what could induce you to repeat ſuch ſtuff?"

"Nay," anſwered Mr. Hillary, "let me rather aſk what could induce any man to write ſuch."—And again,

"Next let me ſing of Numa, called Pompilius;
Who, like our own good King—was very bilious;
Yet, we muſt own, did not amiſs behave—
His miniſter, a lady in a cave,
Who taught him to arrange his ſtate affairs
Better than thoſe that creep up the back * ſtairs.

"Then what do you think of the ſwarm of ephemeron writers, who, though a

* Vide Junius, &c.

little

little crushed and chilled by the ridicule that has been thrown on them, now and then venture forth on trembling tender wing—to sing of hermits living in rocks, nobody knows where or why; who tell stories, and give advice to damsels, coming from nobody knows whence, nobody knows for what; or things beginning with

'All in a castle on a hill,
A baron did abide;
And there, alas! against her will,
Young Emma was his bride.'

And such stuff about Sir Ederhead, and Sir Gawine, which they fancy are old English stories, or at least very like them."

"Nay,

"Nay, now," cried Mrs. Blandford, "you are a great deal too ſevere. Think, my good friend, that there are innumerable young and ſimple folk who love poeſy, but who cannot reliſh any thing they are obliged to read twice over; and that as there is light ſummer-reading for them in the way of novels and tender tales, ſo there is a demand for ſuch eaſily-digeſted pieces of poetry as may not overload their delicate intellects. For my part, I own I am ſtill child enough, or woman enough if you will, to like ſome eaſy verſe that ſooths my ear, without giving me much trouble to think whether it be ſenſe or no —one hears *ſo* much very good ſenſe that is *ſo* tireſome!"

"Mrs.

"Mrs. Albuzzi herſelf," replied Hillary, "could not have given us a more feminine aphoriſm, for the ſake of being contradicted. I know you have a better taſte. For example, you are delighted with ſome of the leſſer poems—where he forgets his ſatirical talents, and ſheaths his claws—of a certain wicked bard yclept Peter Pindar?"

"Undoubtedly."

"The next time I have the honour of waiting on you I will bring you a ſlight thing of that ſort, written by a friend of mine."

"Pray do," ſaid Mrs. Blandford; "and in the mean time, if incomprehenſible ſublimity, and wild extravagance of paſſion,

paſſion, be your delight, I am ſure you will be in raptures with an Ode, which I made Azemia cut out this morning from a newſpaper. Perhaps you may know," added ſhe, caſting a ſly look at Mr. Hillary, "the fair authoreſs, as well as the dangerous *votary of Apollo*, to whom it is obliquely addreſſed, though called an

ODE TO SENTIMENT.

What art thou, Sentiment, unkind,
That thus within the ruby-tinctured wave
Of lovers' hearts doſt love to lave
Thy fangs, that rend the poet's trembling mind
With rapturous, oh! and danger-breathing thrills?
Dwell'ſt thou on rugged rocks, or high-topp'd hills,
Or art thou to the verdant vales confin'd?
I ſee thee floating o'er the primroſe ground,
Thy brows with garlands of mimoſa bound

And

And myrtle-mingling leaves!
Quivering at thy approach, my tear-ſtain'd lids
Are *oped*, as cruel genius bids,
And quick my palpitating boſom heaves!
My ſenſes trill!
By mazy rill *,
That ſeems all form'd of lovers' tears,
The poet of the living lyre appears!
He ſtrikes with dulcet hand the chords,
Singing ſighs and wounding words;
And ſcatters from his pictur'd harp
Spiry † flames and arrows ſharp.
Above, below,
They ſeem to go;
Where threaded ſinews ſeem to ſtart,
Charged with each—a lover's heart!

---

* Nothing can be more truly appropriate, or more affectingly beautiful, than the image of a rivulet of lovers' tears. How unlike the puerile and proſaic images of moſt modern poetry!

† The lovers of poetry will inſtantly recollect this *daring imitation*, and certainly *improvement* on the ſublimity of Gray.

And

And deeply drink my heart's beſt—Oh!
His beamy eyes of ſky-ey blue,
Like ſapphires in their caves of moſſy hue,
Or vernal hyacynths of azure true,
Baptiz'd by Zephyr's hands in flower-extracted dew.
He comes!—Oh! ſilence with thy ermine glove,
Huſh every ſound—but that of him I love;
With ſandals of the thiſtle's * crown,
That feathery floats along the down,
Ye balmy-breathing breezes, move †,

---

* The idea of ſandals for ſilence, formed of the down of the thiſtle, has in it an originality—a tenderneſs which I never expect to ſee equalled. Cobweb contemplation only emulates this intereſting image. Methinks I ſee Contemplation thus veiled, and the ſpiders reſpecting her ſolemn muſing. Then the tranſition to the luxurious *lyre*, over which *tender wiſhes* are *enwreathed with new-blown roſes*, gives an image to the mind which it parts with reluctantly.

† Ye balmy winds, *beneath* my *body blow*.

This line is reckoned the moſt beautiful of Pope's: in my opinion this of Matilda's equals it.

Huſh!

Huſh every ſound but *his voice* whom I love,
And oh! be *cobweb Contemplation* wove
O'er his luxurious lyre,
To notes of ſoft deſire,
That never tire!
Be wreaths of tender thoughts and wandering
wiſhes thrown,
Mix'd with unfaded roſes newly blown!
His trembling ardors he infuſes,
Extract from the melting muſes;
And ſofter far,
Than from the reed-woven jar
Florentine oil in pearly-dropping oozes.
Oh! his wild notes entrance my ſoul,
Yet ah! my tranſports to controul,
* Iron Remembrance comes; and copper Care,
And

* Iron Remembrance, is fine: it conveys ideas of "the iron that entereth the ſoul," but which the ſoul devours in ſilence; while copper *Care* makes us at once ſee ſomething avowed and before the world, as family cares ought to be. Then *ſteely* Sorrow ſucceeds; *ſharp*, yet ſalutary, and the epithet is doubly

 appropriate:

And Sorrow's ſteely form, *upon my ſoul,*
Rouſes the *red Remorſe*;
Ah! cruel curſe
My paſſion fades,
Duty pervades
My every ſenſe; my boſom's Lord appears *,
Prudence *nears*,
† Eyes and ears,
Your boſom's Lord obey!
Huſh'd be your murmurs, heart too tender!
Thou to luxuriant Love muſt *not* ſurrender—

---

appropriate: while *red* Remorſe finiſhes the beautiful picture. The reader ſees at once that Remorſe could not poſſibly be of any other colour.

* The tender Dame to meet her Lord prepares,
And Strephon, ſighing, ſlips down the back ſtairs.

Theſe lines, perhaps, of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, might have occurred to the fair authoreſs (where ſhe ſpeaks ſo feelingly of her boſom's Lord), as well as to the *Bard* ſhe addreſſes.

† There is both moral and pathos in the fair Lyriſt's commanding her eyes and ears to obey in future *her boſom's Lord*—who, it is to be hoped, will henceforward "ſit lightly on his throne," as our immortal poet has it.

Let

Let Della Cruſca thee ſeduce no more;
But to thy conjugal affection true,
Fly for ever from the view
Of eyes, like *ſpring-born* Periwinkle's, blue * !
They fade like ſtars away;
While I, deep ſighing, ſay,
What is pleaſure, what is May?
Love o'er my couch has ſtrewn each ſweet,
Love has ſigh'd, trembling at my feet:
He has indeed,
But o'er the mead
He flies; and Senſibility doth linger †
Only with cruel, quivering finger,
To ſay—Henceforth Matilda ſhuns
Cruſca, and all his wilderneſs of ſuns.

---

* The *novelty* of comparing blue eyes to the ſpring-born Periwinkle, muſt, as well as its ſimplicity, charm every true lover of the muſes.

† Senſibility lingering to direct the poeteſs to ſhun the wilderneſs of ſuns, is ſingularly happy. It appears by ſome other verſes in the delectable newſpaper correſpondence, that, in obedience to Senſibility, ſhe took ſhelter in *Young Grove's ſhade.*

Mrs. Blandford now ceaſed reading—when, to her utter aſtoniſhment, Mr. Hillary, without the leaſt apparent cauſe, or provocation, took up his hat, and, glancing his eyes at Azemia with an expreſſion nobody underſtood, went down ſtairs, and out of the houſe, without ſpeaking one word.

CHAP. III.

The droning ſages drop the drowſy ſtrain,
Then think, and ſpeak, and ſpeak and think again.

COWPER.

BEFORE Mrs. Blandford had recovered of her ſurpriſe, Dr. Proſe entered—though it was rather at an unuſual hour, and all the reſt of the company had departed.

"How are you, my dear Madam?" ſaid the Doctor, in his uſual lively way.

"I am pretty well, Doctor, I thank you," anſwered Mrs. Blandford.

"And you, my ſweet young lady," added Dr. Proſe, turning to Azemia, "how do you find yourſelf this evening?"

Azemia anſwered, that ſhe was well.

"We have been a little ſurpriſed, though, my dear Sir," cried Mrs. Blandford.

"Pray, my good Madam, with what?" enquired the Doctor.

"With Mr. Hillary," ſaid Mrs. Blandford.

"He *is* apt," anſwered the Doctor, looking ſignificantly under his brows, "to ſurpriſe people."

"So I have often heard; but I cannot ſay I ever ſaw any ſymptoms of it before."

"Lady Canter knows otherwiſe," ſaid he.

"So

"So I have heard," replied Mrs. Blandford.

"He is a very odd man," obſerved the Doctor.

"But can be very agreeable if he pleaſes," anſwered ſhe.

"I never happened to meet him in one of his agreeable moods, I ſuppoſe," ſaid the Doctor.

"Poſſibly not," ſaid Mrs. Blandford; "but I aſſure you, my dear Doctor, if you had happened to have come in this evening while Mrs. Albuzzi was here . . . ."

"I never do," interrupted the Doctor, "come knowingly to any place where ſhe is likely to be found."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the lady.

"Indeed," replied the Doctor.

"I wonder at that, though, my good Sir; for I ſhould imagine, that from

your having viſited the ſame countries, and being both literary, you muſt have a number of ideas in common, that . . ."

"I hope not," anſwered Doctor Proſe, "for I am ſure I ſhould ſay nothing about my ideas if they had any ſimilitude to hers; and beſides, my dear Madam, with ſuch volubility of ſpeech as that woman has, what chance in the world ſhould I have of being heard?"

"Of *finiſhing* a ſtory, if you were lucky enough to *begin* it, to be ſure, dear Doctor, you would have but little chance; but then, perhaps . . . . ."

Nobody can tell how long this dialogue, with ſo ſprightly a companion as the Doctor, might have continued, if a violent thundering at the door had not ſtartled them both, and a woman

of

of fashion, but lately known to Mrs. Blandford, but an old acquaintance of Dr. Prose's, had not hastened into the room.

"I am come," said Lady Clara Clangor, "to take my leave of you, Mrs. Blandford. And, dear Doctor Prose, what commands have you for Italy? I am going directly—How delightful—is it not? There is nothing I *do* so abhor, as this England of ours. Dandy is gone on before us—You know Dandy—every body knows him.—Is not he an entertaining creature? We are to overtake him at Hamburgh—the dear wretch is to wait for us. Oh! my God—*il me tarde bien*, not to have set out already. Well, but, my dear Doctor Prose, tell me, what do you think of

public affairs? Do you know, ſome horrid fellows have been telling me that the odious filthy wretches will get the better at laſt!—Oh! my God, if they ſhould—but 'tis impoſſible.—What ſhall *we* be about if they do?—Oh! my good Proſe, how *could* you ever ſpeak in their favour? — Do you know, it was vaſtly ridiculous; and you have no idea how every creature, whoſe opinion is worth having, hates a demmy, as we call them. But tell me, Doctor, what do you think of things?"

"My dear Lady Clara," began the Doctor (ſlowly and ſolemnly he ſpoke), "my dear Lady, there are people whom people of rank love to have conſtantly with them, for the purpoſe of applauding whatever they do or ſay; whoſe buſineſs it is to prevent diſagreeable truths

truths from reaching the ears of their patrons, and contribute to make them as vain, weak, ignorant, and capricious, as they themſelves are abject, ſelfiſh, and paraſitical. — Now, my excellent lady, you muſt allow . . . . . ."

"Oh! my God, Doctor!" exclaimed the Lady, "I will allow any thing upon earth rather than that you ſhould make me a long ſpeech. I dare ſay your opinions are delightful, only that it will take ſo much time to hear them, that it is quite impoſſible for me to ſtay—for I am going to Lady Mary Macmidling's aſſembly, and from thence to the Ducheſs's—and then Scarabée and Squirl, and Jack Swindurn, go home to ſupper with me.— By the bye, Jack is at this moment waiting for me in the coach; and ſo, my dear Doctor, to ſhew you I don't mean

to ſavage you, and how vaſtly delightful I think your converſation, I will take you with me if you are going towards St. James's."

The Doctor, whether in hopes of obtaining an opportunity of concluding the oration, or for ſome other reaſon, accepted this gracious invitation; and Azemia was delighted to find herſelf quietly at ſupper with her benefactreſs.

"Well, my love," ſaid Mrs. Blandford, "and what do you think of our viſitors of this evening?"

"Ah, Madam!" replied Azemia, timidly, "I am but a very incompetent judge—but to be ſure Doctor Proſe . . ."

"Is not amuſing, I allow—but I aſſure you he is one of the firſt men we have

have as to information. Then there was, you know, Mrs. Chiverly, who is accounted ſo accompliſhed a woman, and is ſo well connected; and has a ſort of aſſociation of people of talents about her, in what ſhe calls 'a little quiet way.'—I obſerved ſhe talked to you ſome time."

"Yes," anſwered Azemia, "ſhe told me a vaſt deal about her family connections; and how Siſter Such-a-one lived at a great caſtle in Yorkſhire, and Siſter Such-a-one was married to Sir Peter Pliable, who had a place at court; and ſhe aſked me if I did not think England a great deal better than my own country. I told her no; that I diſliked it very much, for, except you, and one or two other ladies, the women here

here did nothing but find fault with one another, and tear each other's characters to pieces; whereas in my native country they desired only to amuse each other, and were happy to sit and embroider, or sing together. She seemed to smile at my simplicity and ignorance, and told me it was altogether unbecoming in a Turk, but that she hoped I was by this time a Christian, and I should soon learn better. She added, that when once it was ascertained to her (which she had yet no opportunity of asking you), that I was baptized, she would subscribe half-a-guinea with all her heart; and so would Sister Such-a-one, and Sister Such-a-one, and Mrs. Such-a-one, and dear good Mrs. Quibus, the excellent patroness of all

that

that was good and gentle—all, ſhe ſaid, would ſubſcribe to the book ſhe ſhould open for me."

"To the book!" exclaimed Mrs. Blandford, "what could ſhe poſſibly mean?"

"Indeed," replied Azemia, "that is more than I know. I did not underſtand all ſhe ſaid to me—in truth, but very little of it; but I thought ſhe ſeemed to intend me ſome kindneſs that ſhe ſuppoſed I wanted."

"You ſhall never want any thing, my dear Azemia," cried Mrs. Blandford, "while *I* live; and Mrs. Chiverly may ſpare herſelf the parade of exerciſing benevolence, which is never likely to be put to the trial." She then tenderly embraced her beautiful ward, and wiped away the tears that were in her

eyes,

eyes, thinking it uſeleſs to mortify the unconſcious girl, by telling her that Mrs. Chiverly was one of thoſe perſons at once oſtentatious and narrow-minded, who love money ſo extremely, that they dare not uſe it, and yet are fond of appearing full of ſenſibility and charity towards thoſe whom they degrade under pretence of aſſiſting, by repreſenting them as objects of benevolence among their great friends. Of ſuch there are numbers to be met with, who gratify two paltry paſſions at once, and, riſing higher in their own eſtimation by the compact, aſſure themſelves they are the very beſt people in the world, and quite *amiable*.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Like *us* they were deſign'd to eat, to drink,
To talk, and (every now and then) to *think*.

CHURCHILL.

"MASTER!" cried Bat Bowling to Charles Arnold, as they *wound* down Caſtle-rigg, "I am ſure I ſaw two Exciſemen of Whitehaven among the trees there; they know, an pleaſe your honour, that we are comed from ſea, and I warrant they will ſtop and ſearch us; what ſhall I do with the Ingine ſchawl, and the two Barcelona handkerchiefs?"

chiefs? I lay my life we ſhall be put into limbo, and made no more account on than a muſty biſcuit."

The moon (which, in all the moſt celebrated novels lately publiſhed, ſhines every night in the moſt accommodating manner in the world) had given this alarming information to honeſt Bat, Charles Arnold's ſea ſervant, while he himſelf had long been fixed in contemplation of that beautiful planet, as it hung in ſilver radiance over the tall fells among which he was wandering.

"Oh!" beauteous Azemia," cried he, ſighing, "where art thou? what has been thy deſtiny during the almoſt twelve months of our cruel ſeparation!"

Thus

Thus loſt in a reverie, Bat was under the neceſſity of ſpeaking again.—"Prithee, maſter," cried he, "don't get into them there brown ſtudies. I tell you we be ſcented by a couple of damned raſcally Exciſemen, or Cuſtom-houſe Officers, or ſuch like; and the upſhot will be ſome hell of a job or another."

Charles Arnold rode on.

The ſolemn ſcene through which he was travelling reminded him forcibly of thoſe where he had paſſed the laſt three months—the image of Azemia following him whitherſoever he went.

"It was thus," ſaid he, ſtill regardleſs of his ſervant, who every now and then

then ventured an admonitory ſentence; "it was thus that by thy light, ſweet and mild planet, I found under thy quiet beams, among the rocks of Seldzſberg, a ſhort reſpite from what are called my duties.—Yes! wild northern region, where I have in a boat paſſed whole nights in gliding through your labyrinth of rocks—I have envied the fiſher, who earns his ſubſiſtence among them; and I have thought, vain thought! which it will never be in my power to realize, how happy I ſhould be in one of the boarded huts that are perched on thoſe fantaſtic ſummits, if Azemia, my charming Azemia, was within it. There! there! would be *my* Paradiſe!

"Quiet retreats of uncultivated nature, how diſtinctly ye return upon my memory!

mory! Would I could retire for ever to your wild ſolitudes from ſcenes of dirt and darkneſs—of obſcenity and ignorance, in which I now paſs the greateſt part of my time, for no reaſon that can poſſibly be given, unleſs it be to enforce, as a mere machine, the operation of the

Ratio ultima Regum;

which decides that men are animals, born only to contrive how to annoy and deſtroy each other. How can any thinking being believe it? Yet how many other things do we profeſs to believe as abſurd; which ſo far from believing, we never think about at all! I remember that, till lately, I ſhould have ſtared at any man, perhaps have inſulted him, who had told me that I was a miſerable

ſilly

ſilly fellow to allow myſelf to be ſhut up in a floating dungeon, ſometimes under the command of a capricious or unfeeling man, for leſs money than I could earn with the ſaw or the ſpade, while breathing the freſh air of Heaven, and gazing on the green boſom of the earth:—and yet ſuch is the life to which my mother, I thank her, has condemned me; and which I have been taught to think an honourable profeſſion, and one that will produce a great quantity of glory to me."

"An pleaſe your honour," ſaid Bat, who could not get the Cuſtom-houſe Officers out of his head; "an pleaſe your honour, I've a heard how this here Gert Britton of ourn is the freeeſt of all the countries upon yearth, and that there is no let or hindrunce to a man's doing as he wull in no ſhape whatever.—Now,

thinks

thinks I, ſometimes to myſelf, why how can that be — when there's ever ſo much money taken from a man, whether he likes or no; and then if he does but go for to buy ever ſo little a matter of counterband goods, whip! he's in priſon! Now, for my part, I can't think, as I ſays to myſelf, where'd be the harm of our trading with folks of other nations, without all that there. I can't ſay as I likes your forrinners—I knows one Engliſhman, with beef and pudding in his belly, as the ſong ſays, can beat ten Frenchmen: and I dares for to ſay they always will on the ſeas, which is our own eilemint all the world over. But then when it pleaſes his Majeſty, God bleſs him, to give us peace, why I ſees no why or wherefore, for not enjoying all the good things of both countries,

and

and all countries beyond ſea; for if they want what we can ſpare, why not ſend it them, and take in change what they can ſpare, and we want, without all this racket of counterband and duties? Now that's my notion of trade, and I do think it would be better.—What cheap brandy we ſhould have in that caſe!"

"Your laſt argument is a convincing one," replied Charles Arnold, laughing, and rouſed from his reverie by this characteriſtic remark of his man's; "and in general, friend Bat, thy notions are not bad ones. But, if there were no duties there would be no revenue to pay ſoldiers, and ſuch honeſt fellows as we are, who you muſt allow *do* alſo deſerve to be paid, becauſe ſoldiers only are not ſufficient to defend an iſland, as this is where we live."

"Aye,

"Aye, aye, maſter, that's as true as the day. 'Tis *we* that are all in all to old England; and I'll be bould for to ſay, that there's ne'r a true-born Engliſhman, gentle or ſimple, that would not be free to pay us with a good will."

"I believe it, indeed, my good fellow; and therefore you muſt not murmur, you know, at duties, and cuſtoms, and taxes, that are applied to ſo excellen a purpoſe."

"Aye, Sir; but I have heard tell as how there be a power of people, who are neither ſoldiers nor ſailors, nor does no yearthly thing for their pay, but ride about in coaches, and dreſt in gold-laced cloaths, and have deſperate fine

houſes, and all manner of good things to eat and drink; and theſe people are paid, they ſay, for all this, by the hard labour of poor folks that all helps to contribute rates and taxes; and at the ſame time they deſpiſes them, and tramples upon them, and calls 'em ſwine and hogs, and the like of that. Now to be ſure, your honour, if ſo be as that *is* the caſe, why one can't but think it a little hardiſh, that ſome folks ſhould have a great deal of money paid um for doing nothing but living on the fruits of the yearth, while others agin ſhould work early and late to raiſe thoſe very fruits of the yearth, and yet not be allowed enough to keep body and ſoul together. I got a book put into my hand t'other day, which was wrot, I believe, by ſome Juſtis of Peace up at London;

and

and it ſaid, Sir, as how poor folks had no biſneſs to think; that it was a bad thing, and ſerved only to make them loſe their time: but I don't underſtand that—What! has not a poor man got a ſoul as well as a rich man?—I am ſure our Chaplain have told me he have often and often. Well—and if he *has* a ſoul, what is a ſoul but what one thinks with? And if another, becauſe he is rich, and I am poor, goes for to take away my power of thinking, why, what is it but making me not a man any longer, but a brute, like unto his horſe, and his dog, only for the ſake of uſing me worſe than he would uſe them? for, to ſpeak the truth, the horſes and the dogs of lords and gentry are a great deal better off than their poor neighbours very often."

"I did not think, Bat," ſaid Arnold, "that you had been ſo able a metaphyſician."

"No, Sir," replied Bat, with great ſimplicity, "I don't pretend for to be able to be a phyſician—but I can ſee plain enough, that the reaſon why that there Juſtis of Peace, or placeman, up at London, as wrote them there books, would not have poor folks *think*:—it's for fear they ſhould find out there's no occaſion for ſuch folks as them; and beſides, Sir, let poor folks think ever ſo much, they would not be diſcontented if they had enough to have comfortable cloathing and wholeſome food, and a houſe over their heads; for, if they thought ever ſo long, they would know that it's quite an unpoſſible thing for all men to

be

be rich and high alike; but ſome muſt work more than others, and ſome muſt be learned men to govern the others, and direct their work for the beſt, but not make them ſlaves; and, therefore, the poor would not be angry at not being rich, ſince it has pleaſed God to make different degrees of every thing; only the poor that work for thoſe that have no need to work for themſelves, ought to have the common comforts of life, which to be ſure, Sir, a poor man cannot get now if he tries ever ſo."

"You ſpeak like an oracle, Bat; and if I were not as tired as I am I would anſwer you, and give you my notion of the ſubjects you have been talking of—though, I aſſure you, we who by courteſy are called *gentlemen* are very often ſo

brought up, that the *quality we think with* is no more exercifed than that of thofe honeft fellows, who are never taught any thing but that they muft labour for a mere exiftence. But I'm glad you have got over your fear of Cuftom-houfe Officers. And now, Bat, do *you* think as hard as you can on your fide, and till we get to the next town, which cannot be far off, I believe, and I will think on mine; and perhaps between us both we may make fome notable difcoveries in politics or philofophy."

"Ah! Sir, Sir," exclaimed Bat, fhaking his head, "I knows what you ftodies—I'm much out in my reckoning if you ben't a thinking of your fweetheart more than of talking politics—or about Philofophers—and fuch; but,

but, howſumdever, Sir, ſince you deſire me to hold my tongue, to be ſure I knows my duty better than to interrupt you."

The maſter and man were ſtill among the fells; the moon had now ſunk behind the moſt diſtant of their ſummits, but her declining light ſtill irradiated the deep blue expanſe, and had given place to myriads of ſtars, on which the eyes of Arnold were fixed.—The arch of indiſtinct brilliance, called the milky way, ſeemed juſt above his head.—" What art thou," ſaid he, " thou beauteous path of congregated fires, about which ſo many fables have been imagined?—What is thy diſtance from this ſilly world of ours, where we ridiculouſly think of ſo much conſe-

quence our paltry pleaſures and puerile pains—this very ſilly world, which is perhaps of no more relative weight in the great ſcheme of the univerſe than one of your ſmalleſt ſpangles of ethereal fire?—And you, ye planets, is this ſomething denominated a ſoul, which my uninformed companion has juſt called the power of thinking, attached to this frail feeble body? or has it a diſtinct exiſtence, which, when the miſerable turmoil of this ant-hill I now creep upon ſhall be over, will poſſeſs ſeparate conſciouſneſs, and be in a ſtate to inveſtigate your orbs, and range among ſyſtems, of which the wiſeſt of us now underſtand nothing?"

Thus fallen from his aërial journey in that confeſſion we are all compelled

to

to make, that we cannot long keep above the atmosphere of this our planet, Arnold returned to the contemplation of what was to him the *most celestial* among its earthly inhabitants, Azemia.

CHAP. V.

Soft tremors, trembling terrors, cypreſs glooms,
Lovers and ſpectres wandering in the tombs!

WHILE Charles Arnold purſues his journey towards London—

Chewing the cud of ſweet and bitter fancy,

and encouraging that hope which ſtill revives in the youthful boſom, however chilled by fear, or repreſſed by diſappointment, we will *almoſt*, in the words of a noble and elegant ſentimental

mental authoreſs *, relate (though it will form a compariſon, perhaps, but little to our advantage, when contraſted with our own plain and homely ſtyle) an incident that happened to Azemia, who was now once more with her benefactreſs in the country, and accompanying her on a viſit. We are happy that the facts are ſo well aſſimilated, that we can avail ourſelves of words, ſo much more *elegant* than any *we* could have choſen in the deſcriptive and pathetic united. We muſt premiſe, however, that a young Iriſh nobleman had been *very particular* towards our beauteous heroine for ſome days; and Azemia, who had found the image of Charles Arnold return upon her memory with new attractions among

* The elegant Lady H.....

theſe ſweet ſolitudes, was uneaſy at his notice, and very glad when ſhe heard one evening that he was to go the next day. The next day, as he did not appear, ſhe concluded he *was* gone, and *tranquillized* her ſpirits about it till towards evening, when—Lord Scudabout had not been named—a circumſtance occurred that confirmed Azemia in her hopes that he was no longer a gueſt at Luxmore Caſtle. This flattering conjecture, in ſome meaſure, reſtored her tranquillity: they were in the library, and a ſalver of macaroons, queen cakes, and biſcuits, with orgeat and lemonade, was brought round, and found very acceptable. Lady Dorothy Dawdle began to amuſe herſelf by looking over ſome capital caricatures, though her ladyſhip was rather ſurpriſed

to

to find ſome of them in ſuch a place, becauſe they were exaggerated repreſentations of ſome very great perſonages, in ſituations highly derogatory to their exalted dignity and *ſerene* conſequence. Mrs. Blandford was examining a whole-length picture of the *late* Empreſs *of all* the Ruſſias, which covered one ſide of the room: and Azemia, having nothing to do, looked *fearfully* around it; for ſhe conceited that Lord Scudabout, who (unlike the generality of his countrymen) was of diminutive ſtature, might be hid in one of the lower receſſes of the mahogany bookcaſes, and jump out upon her all of a ſudden: however, *diſcovering* no traces of him, ſhe rejoiced at *diſcerning* none, and, advancing towards a glaſs door, which was thrown open to admit the fragrance of various

ſweet

ſweet flowers that in luxuriant perfume ſurrounded it, ſhe was ſtrongly tempted to ſtray upon the *verdant* lawn. All was calm—the breezy air breathed odoriferous gales:—her feet with involuntary motion led her to a walk, where, as much as ſhe had dared, ſhe had thought of Charles Arnold. The *meeting* beech formed a canopy above, the *bluſhing*, roſe, and the *twining** woodbine, in wild profuſion, bent their blooming branches to ſcatter beneath her ſteps their ſuave ſcents. Juſt as ſhe entered the grove ſhe caſt her fine eyes towards the apartment once inhabited by the young

* We need not point out to the tender ſuſceptibility of refined *elegance*, how this *meeting*, *bluſhing*, and *twining* ſcene is calculated to ſoften the heart of a juvenile female, indulging reveries on the dear youth of her boſom.

nobleman

nobleman in queſtion: the pink lute-ſtring curtains waved through the open window.—Azemia was a little alarmed, but ſhe proceeded.

The plaintive *Philomela** had commenced her evening melody in dulcet trills.—With ſlow and penſive air the beauteous Azemia moved: each ſeat, each ſhrub, recalled ſome dear idea to her mind; for here glowed the amaranthus; there was reclined the "love lies a-bleeding," which particularly affected her; and here bluſhed the *gay*

* Philomela, always ſo much in requeſt with the poets, has lately been preſſed into the ſervice of the Noveliſt to *a degree*; certainly beyond what the facts of natural hiſtory authoriſe: but when the ſun and moon are alſo in continual requiſition, ſhall not a bird obey the witchery?

carnation,

carnation, the ruby-tinctured pink, and the ſomniferous poppy, emulative of the evening ſky, and ſacred to the dull God of dormitorial and ſedative happineſs.

Wrapt in this ſad but ſoothing contemplation, as in a peliſſe, ſhe advanced till it grew late, and a wheelbarrow, left there by the careleſſneſs of the under gardener, obſtructed an opening path apparently deſigned to lead to ſome place (as moſt paths do, except in novels); its winding turns ſerpentined imperceptibly up an eaſy aſcent: ſhe was rouſed from her reverie by finding herſelf at the top of the hill, where, contrary to all expectation, ſhe beheld a mauſoleum of *black* marble, which put her extremely in mind of a moſque or a minaret in her own country. (The ideas

of

of theſe two things were not very diſtinct in her mind.) She did not greatly enjoy the diſcovery, for it was now almoſt dark; and though the moon could not chooſe but riſe on one ſide, the ſun had entirely ſunk on the other.

Azemia, however, entered the gloomy building—ſhe knew not why—(We know not neither, unleſs, becauſe ſhe was guided by ſome *inviſible impulſe*; and becauſe it is now neceſſary in novels for all the heroines to go into black marble mauſoleums and greyſtone ruins whenever they meet with them.)—However, Azemia approached; —the door ſtood a-jar: the gloom of the ſurrounding evergreens, particularly the cypreſſes, caſt a ſolemn ſhade upon the occaſion; and an owl from a

neighbouring

neighbouring ivy bush hooted audibly, and cried, "Tee-whit!" which Azemia had heard from Mrs. Blandford's old housekeeper was always a bad sign. She stopped—she shuddered—she was inspired with a secret terror!—she felt herself irresistibly impelled as by an invisible hand to penetrate this drear abode. The noise she made in entering alarmed her: the door grated on its rusty hinges; the owl again cried, "Tee-whit!"—and the wind howl'd—All served to increase these sepulchral horrors of this lugubrious residence of mouldering-mortality.

Azemia trembled, as fearfully, she beheld the dome; for the moon now opportunely coming from behind a cloud, threw a feeble light through the long

long caſements of painted glaſs. Azemia fancied herſelf Juliet in the vault of the Capulets—(for, unlike other foreigners, ſhe underſtood Shakeſpeare to a miracle)—and again ſhe ſhuddered: a door was half open on the right hand; ſhe puſhed it gently, and found it led from the mauſoleum into the chapel. She entered the aiſle—ſomething white appeared at the farther end; the rays of the moon fell directly upon it, and it ſeemed to move.—Suddenly the great bell in the turret tolled, and Azemia was overcome with horrible dread, and unable to retreat. The tolling ceaſed, but ſhe heard the tread of feet: ſhe became immovable; ſhe uttered a faint ſcream—a *form* appeared.—*It* perceived her fears—*it* flew to ſupport her in *its* arms—it

ſunk

ſunk with her on the black marble pavement (on which her *white* drapery gracefully floated); and nobody can tell how this terrific ſcene might have ended, if Mrs. Blandford, alarmed at the abſence of Azemia, had not moſt fortunately arrived at that moment in ſearch of her, attended by a footman with a candle and lantern, who found Lord Scudabout ſupporting Azemia, yet laughing exceſſively at the fear he had put her into. Mrs. Blandford ſeverely reproving him, he ran to the ſtables, mounted his horſe, and galloped back to his companions at Lord Oddberry's, from whom he had ſuddenly eſcaped to execute this frolic, as if he had foreſeen Azemia's evening excurſion.

Mrs.

Mrs. Blandford ſoon ſoothed to peace the agitated boſom of her fair ward; and Lady Dorothy Dawdle, who preſided as miſtreſs of this hoſpitable manſion, declared that Lord Scudabout ſhould never enter it again, and that ſhe would the next day go with her ponies to the Marchioneſs, his mother, who lived about ten miles off, and complain of the indecorous behaviour he had been guilty of.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

" Why do the Swiniſh Multitude repine?"
Quoth fat, 'Squire Gobble, in full ſwill and cram.
" Raſcals!—do *they* expect like *us* to dine?
" As to their *wanting*, that is all a ſham."—

From the Dundas MS. collection.

MRS. Blandford, with her fair *protegée*, now went on a ſhort viſit to the houſe of Lady Dorothy Dawdle's ſon by her firſt huſband.

It is neceſſary for *us* to give an account of this gentleman and lady.

Colonel

Colonel Brusque, then, born of a military family, and inheriting a handsome fortune, had been brought up to serve (as they call it) his country; that is, he had entered at thirteen into the Guards, and had a very military air, a fine round red chubby face, a decisive manner, a great contempt for the people, and a firm persuasion that a gentleman was an animal, whose highest pretensions ought to be to strut about in a red coat, and enforce, if it were necessary, the orders of his superiors. He seldom read any thing but the Army List, or the Court Calendar, and internally had a great contempt for every sort of knowledge, which was not comprised in those two useful publications. But his wife and her mother, Lady Dorothy, were of the order of women of science;

ence; and Colonel Brusque, who was glad of every opportunity of relieving the insipidity of living alone with the one, and whose interest made it requisite for him to please the other, had given into their system of collecting occasionally all sorts of people; and as they gave excellent dinners, and lived at an easy distance from town, it is inconceivable what a variety of persons might be found at their villa, between Easter and Whitsuntide especially.—Here then various acquisitions of taste and information might be made: here every branch of knowledge was constantly progressive, among professors or proficients in every art or science that gives convenience or lends lustre to social life.—Here (to arrange them with due accuracy) were to be seen,

Aëronauts

Aëronauts and Architects, Actors and Archbishops, Alarmists and Auctioneers, Attorneys; Astronomers and Archdeacons, Accoucheurs and Aides-des-Camp, Antiquarians, and Associators and Agents.

Borough-jobbers, Bishops and Biographers; Booksellers, Botanists, Baronets, and Blacklegs; Barons, Brewers, Bankers, and Butts*.

Critics, Counts, and Calculators; Chymists, Counsellors, Captains (led) and Contractors; Curates (rarely) Clerks, Canal-makers and Ciceroni, Convey-

* A Butt is one of the most necessary animals in a great house. The same useful being, under other names, may be found in other parts of this list.

ancers, Cabinet-makers and Cabinet-miniſters.

Divines (dignified), Doctors, Demonſtrators, Dukes, Ducheſſes, and Dancing-maſters, (but no Democrats.)

Engineers, Earls, Eſſayiſts, Election-men and Electors, Enſigns, Encyclopediſts, Encloſure-ſchemers, Electricians, Eſquires.

Financiers, Flower-fanciers, Fellows of the Royal and Antiquarian Societies, Fidlers, Flute-players and Faro-players.

Germans, Geographers, Genealogiſts, Graziers, Gameſters, Generals, Gazette-writers, and Grooms of the Stole; Gardeners and Guinea-traders,

Gaugers

Gaugers and Gunpowder-makers, Heralds, Houſebuilders and Hiſtrionic Heroes, Hiſtorians, and Hautbois-players and Harpers.

Jews, Jewellers, Improvers, Italians, Jerkers*, Jobbers, and Informers.

Knights of the Garter, Bath, Thiſtle, and St. Patrick; Knights Banneret, Naval and Civil; and Clerks of the Kitchen and King's Friends.

Lawyers, Loungers, Ladies, Laureats, Liverymen, and Lord Lieutenants and Loan-jobbers.

* A Jerker is ſomething under Government; probably a very *uſeful* perſonage with a very large ſalary.

Muſicians, Magnetiſers, Match-makers, Middleſex Juſtices, Maroon-hunters, and Marquiſſes; Metaphyſicians, Methodiſts, and Mineralogiſts; Majors, and Maids of Honour.

Nabobs, News-writers, Novel-makers, Nova-Scotia Baronets, and Neceſſary Women.

Orthographers, Officers, Opticians, Optimiſts, and Old Women.

Pickle-ſellers, Philoſophers, Penſioners, Purſuers of the Picturesque, Players, Prieſts, Peers, Paraſites, Party-pamphleteers, Provoſts, Principals, Picture-dealers, Projectors, Phyſicians, Purveyors, and Poets!

Quacks and Quietiſts.

Reviewers,

Reviewers, *Rat-catchers*, Remembrancers, Recorders, Rhetoriticians, Raja-hunters, and Reevites and Runners (to the Treasury.)

Spies, Solicitors, Salesmen, Statesmen, Secretaries, Serjeants at Law, and Stock-brokers.

Troubadours*, Thunder-makers, Tourists, Theologists, Trinitarians, and Templars and Toad-eaters.

* Troubadours, Wandering Bards, who, in the days of Chivalry, wandered from castle to castle, and were sumptuously entertained, while they repaid their good cheer by entertaining the Lord and his guests with songs and *stories*. Something of the same sort may be perceived now in the retainers of some great houses.

Underwriters, Undertakers*, Underſtrappers, and Under-graduates.

Viſcounts, Viol-de-Gambo Performers, Verdurers, Vintners.

Waiters, Wits, Wanderers, Wonderers, Word-catchers, &c. &c. &c.

To deſcribe half the accumulated talent that was every day collected in revolving groups compoſed of characters ſo various, and generally ſo *uſeful*, would be difficult; I feel, indeed, that it would exceed my powers,

* Not buryers of the dead: the gentlemen here meant are deſcribed in Comedies of about ſeventy years ago.

even

even though I ſhould have the reſolution to extend this, my firſt attempt, till it ſwelled into five very large volumes; and were I ſure that, when I had done, my gentle readers would have the reſolution to read them all: I will confine myſelf, therefore, to a dialogue or two explanatory and illuſtrative.

The Lady of Colonel Bruſque was not only a perſonage of high mental pretenſions, but alſo of very illuſtrious rank; and ſhe never ſeemed entirely able to forget that Lady Arſinoe Arrogant had married a Commoner, though he was a man of family not very much inferior to her own. The Arrogant blood, however, (in ſpite of the elegant refinement of her mind, and a *tint* of

Methodiſm, which teaches perfect humility) continually reminded her, at the head of this magnificent and well-furniſhed table, that Lady Arſinoe was *deplacée*.

One day (to uſe the ſtyle, brief and ſimple, of an admirable noveliſt, whom I am proud to imitate), the following converſation took place at it:

The company were Colonel and Lady Arſinoe Bruſque, Lord and Lady Limberham, Sir Frederick Fanfaron, Doctor Didapper, a Divine; Mr. Climb-up, a young man of great promiſe in the Treaſury; Sir Marmaduke Manchet, formerly a Paſtry-cook in the city, remarkable for the moſt excellents puffs,

but

but lately knighted on having carried up an addreſs in favour of this neceſſary and glorious war; Mr. Muſtyflour, a Commiſſary of Stores, who had acquired a princely fortune in its courſe; together with ſome men of inferior note: Lady Dorothy Dawdle and ſeveral other ladies, among whom were Mrs. Blandford and Azemia.

Politics are a diſagreeable ſubject, only when they may occaſion diſcuſſions wherein inferior people and *vulgars*, who may happen to be admitted to the tables of the Great, may raiſe the indignation of "*les Gens comme il faut*," by hazarding their abſurd and ill-founded notions. At this table it was accounted certain that every body thought

alike, and that all would join in the juſt and elaborate panegyric which Dr. Didapper began in favour of our heaven born Miniſter; who, as he praiſed the turtle, had not only, he ſaid, by wiſe and vigorous meaſures, imported a more conſiderable quantity of that admirable oviparous *Amphiſbea* than at any former period, but had exported a number of nefarious villains to cultivate the European arts in the Southern hemiſphere, and learn to hunt kangaroos, than any former Premier had ever done. He added, that probably the kangaroo itſelf might ſoon become an article of Britiſh luxury.

"Your obſervation is juſt, Sir," ſaid an eloquent Member of the Iriſh Houſe of

of Commons; " and I am free to confeſs, that, whether I look forward to the paſt, or turn my eyes back on the future, I am utterly loſt in admiration at the magnitude of the indeſcribable genius of this great Premier. He embraces, Sir, with a keenneſs of arm, and a ſtrength of eye that is every way wonderful, a reach of idea beyond the optics of vulgar nerves; and 'tis impoſſible to forbear to obſerve, that, while he diſcourages all trifling and inſignificant levelling, he is himſelf a leveller upon a moſt grand ſcale, for he makes the rich poor; and though indeed I have not heard of his making many poor rich, yet, ſomehow or other, I am perſuaded in my own mind, as I will be glad to explain . . . . . "

"My dear Mr. *Fitz-Solanum**," ſaid Colonel Bruſque, "your faculties of ratiocination are admirable; but allow me, on the firſt bluſh of the buſineſs, to remark that . . . . . Lady Limberham, you have not taſted this fricandeau—give me leave to recommend it to your Ladyſhip; I aſſure you it is made after a receipt I got at Vienna."

"Colonel!" cried Sir Marmaduke Manchet, who always ſeemed to evade culinary converſation; "Colonel! where do you get your Madeira?—I think it

* Not Solomon, as ſome, through error, might read. Solanum is the Night-ſhade—the Potatoe is of this genus; and Mr. Fitz-Solanum might probably *ſpring* from ſome Mileſian family of great antiquity, cultivators of that admirable and nutritive vegetable.

admirable;

admirable; perhaps the very beſt I have taſted ſince the mayoralty of my friend Sir Anthony Armadillo, who, you know, traded largely to the Weſt Indies, and always ſent *his* Madeira there twice."

"'Faith," cried Mr. *Fitz-Solanum*, "I ſeldom get any good Madeira. I had ſome, it is true, about ſix months ago—the very beſt I ever drank; but the ſhip it was in was taken by a curſed Republican privateer—the devil fetch thoſe free-booting ſons of b——s!"

"As to what you ſay in regard to the poor," ſaid Mr. Climbup to Mrs. Blandford, who had been talking to him in a low voice, "really, Madam, it ſeems to me as if your exceſſive and acute ſenſibility,

ſenſibility, which, pardon me, the ladies are a *leetle* too apt to indulge, has occaſioned you to ſee this matter through a falſe medium: for, after all, now, really—what have theſe eternal grumblers to complain of?"

"Of exceſſive poverty, Sir."

"My dear, dear Mrs. Blandford—the poverty of the poor!—to hear a woman of underſtanding talk ſo! Good Madam, how can you ſeparate a poor man from his poverty? Theſe hewers of wood, and drawers of water, would you have them wear ſilk and velvet, or drink Champaigne and Madeira?"

"By no means," replied Mrs. Blandford, mildly; "but I would have the labourer,

bourer, as was the caſe ſince I was old enough to make obſervations, able to carry ſome food beſides bread into the field where he toils all day, which, I believe, is ſeldom or never the caſe now. I am told, Sir, that the poor man, in his daily work, is barely ſupplied with bread; his family often compelled to live on bran mixed up with greaſe, and their drink only water. Now, as you, and every advocate for the preſent order of things and the worthy gentlemen who order them, have invariably perſiſted in aſſerting that England never was ſo proſperous as at this moment, notwithſtanding the juſt and neceſſary war, I wiſh to have it explained to *me* (who, as a woman, cannot be ſuppoſed, you know, to be able deeply to make theſe enquiries), how it happens, that while

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the rich are better, the poor are worſe off than they were twenty years ſince? and why, if our trade and manufactures are ſo flouriſhing, and our reſources ſtill ſo immenſe, it happens, that our gazettes are full of bankrupts, our jails full of debtors; that our feelings are continually ſhocked by public executions, and that our poor are literally periſhing with hunger in their wretched cottages? Rouſſeau, it is true, ſays, that the poor are the immediate children of the rich. He is eccentric and chimerical, I know, but the facts I have ſtated I know *are* facts—I do know, for I ſee it every day before my eyes, that the diſtreſs of the middling and lower ranks has increaſed, is increaſing, and certainly ought to be diminiſhed."

"Impoſſible,

"Impoſſible, my good Madam—the thing is impoſſible.—(Give me leave to drink a glaſs of wine with you, Miſs Mincer; which do you chooſe?)—I ſay, Madam, that, in the exiſting circumſtances, it appears clearly to me, who am in the Treaſury, the natural reſort of all thoſe ſort of things——(Lord Limberham, ſhall I ſend you any jelly?—Give me leave to help you, Sir Frederic?—A tartlet, Miſs Hickumbottom?)—ſort of things—happen to know a little of all that, that . . . . on the face of—(a little of that Blanc Mange),—it is impoſſible to arrange things otherwiſe than they are."

"Lord! Mr. Climbup," drawled Lady Arſinoe, "by what chance have you begun ſuch converſation as you have choſen for dinner?

dinner?—For goodneſs' ſake, don't make one ſick with talking of ſuch nauſeous ſubjects! Sir Frederic Fanfaron, you were at the Opera on Saturday. *Can* you tell me who that *exceſſive* odd-looking perſon was with Lady Aviary?"

"Oh, true! I know perfectly whom your Ladyſhip means, but her deſignation is beyond me. The Lady Bobkinſes were quizzing her paſt compute: I believe I aſked Jack Biddycoop, but, 'faith, I've forgot what he ſaid; I dare ſay we ſhall ſee her at Lady Buckray's maſquerade. Your Ladyſhip will be there?"

"Yes, I ſuppoſe, one muſt endure it," replied the Lady with the moſt decided apathy, "for an hour or ſo; but I ſhall

I ſhall make my eſcape as ſoon as I can. I ſuſpect that dear woman, who, to be ſure, has a moſt unwearied way of driving all her friends wild in pure civility, will have an aſſemblage of all the queereſt animals ſhe can muſter, and that Noah's ark, or Exeter Change, will be nothing to her collection of odd fiſh and unheard-of fowl."

Sir Frederic now whiſpered the lady, who nodded, and cried umph; and, as the deſſert was ſoon after finiſhed, and the ladies had taken their wine, the party broke up. The next day Mrs. Blandford left a houſe in which the ſociety ſo little ſuited her; but was very much ſurpriſed to receive, on reaching her own houſe in Hertfordſhire, which was eleven miles diſtant

from

from Colonel Bruſque's, and about twice the diſtance from Lady Buckray's, a card of invitation to her Ladyſhip's maſqued ball for herſelf and Azemia. With this lady Mrs. Blandford had been acquainted from her infancy: they were ſchool fellows, and had lived, for the firſt fifteen years of their lives, much gether—when one had married an Iriſh Peer, and the other a Country Gentleman. Their friendſhip now languiſhed on the part of the woman of faſhion, who ſtill, however, nodded and ſmiled whenever ſhe ſaw her old friend, and occaſionally lamented how ſorry ſhe was that they did not meet more frequently; declared how little pleaſure there was in her ſtation of life; how fatiguing it was to go to Court; and how happy ſhe ſhould be if ever

her

her Lord's avocations permitted them to retire ſnugly into the country to ſocial and domeſtic happineſs, where ſhe could ſee her old friends in a quiet comfortable way.

Mrs. Blandford, to whom neither the moſt brilliant nor the ſnuggeſt of theſe aſſociations could afford any pleaſure, never ſeemed to doubt the ſincerity of theſe profeſſions, becauſe ſhe cared nothing whether they were ſincere or no; nor did ſhe ever appear to reſent an eſtrangement which did not at all affect her. She was, however, little diſpoſed to attend a maſquerade; an entertainment for which, though ſhe did not think it much more dangerous to young people than others, ſhe had no predilection. She therefore ſent an excuſe; but was

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the next day ſurpriſed by a viſit from Lady Buckray herſelf, who ſo earneſtly preſſed, and even inſiſted on Mrs. Blandford's obliging her, that, rather than appear to reſent her former coolneſs, ſhe agreed to be preſent with Azemia at this fête, and that they would ſtay the night; Lady Buckray aſſuring her that ſhe need not encounter the fatigue of returning, as there were beds at her ſervice. Mrs. Blandford, however, in aſſenting, could not but recollect what had paſſed at the table of Colonel Bruſque, nor help ſuſpecting that ſhe was among the odd fiſh, and unheard-of fowl, hinted at by Lady Arſinoe.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

"I do beguile the thing I am."

SHAKESPEARE.

"And painted Flattery hides her ſerpent train in flowers."

GRAY.

NOVEL-writers are accuſtomed to amuſe their readers with maſquerades, as well as with ghoſts. Following then one or other of our two moſt celebrated writers (Fielding and Madame D'Arblay), I am ſtrongly tempted to try

try my ſkill in the arduous taſk of deſcribing, at full length, the adventures of the maſquerade: but my modeſty conquers my ambition. Repreſſed, therefore, by that humility which I hope will be deemed graceful by the beſt judges, I will confine myſelf to a deſcription taken from a diurnal print, the proprietor of which was preſent, and which is ſo admirably done, that I ſhould deſpair of making my account, were I to attempt it, at once ſo comprehenſive and ſo brilliant.—*Allons donc!*

"On Tueſday laſt the grand maſquerade and fête, ſo long in preparation, and ſo much the object of expectation in the firſt circles, was given at the Right Honourable the Counteſs

of

of B——s——, at her delightful villa of Laurel Lodge. The ſuper-elegant and taſteful decorations were highly creditable to the care and contrivance of Signor Babinetto, who conducted them, as well as to the exquiſite taſte, and beautiful fancy, of the fair and noble directreſs of this magnificent entertainment. The great ſaloon was hung with roſe-coloured ſatin, feſtooned above with a drapery of ſilver crape, bordered with foils of various colours, and knotted up at intervals with wreaths of the fineſt artificial flowers, mingled with gold and ſilver taſſels. The leſſer ſaloon was fitted up to repreſent the hall of Jonquils, as it is deſcribed in one of the fairy tales from the admirable pen of Madame La Comteſſe D'Anois; but, elegant as it was, the great drawing-

room exceeded it. This ſuperb room opens on the ſouthern lawn by a pair of very large folding-doors of the fineſt crown glaſs: the beauty of the internal arrangements of this room may be imagined, by our readers of taſte, when we inform them that, on each ſide, were placed repreſentations of various trees, ſo admirably done, that they conveyed a complete idea of "the Fathers of the Foreſt." In ſhort, it admirably preſented the Enchanted Wood of Taſſo; and at a given time, when much of the company was collected into that apartment, a maſque repreſenting Rinaldo, a perſon of high diſtinction, entered, ſtruck theſe maſſy repoſitories, and, lo! from each ſtarted an angelic nymph, who were, we are aſſured, ſixteen of the moſt celebrated beauties in ſuperior life.

Their

Their lovely hair flowed gracefully on their ſhoulders, crowned with myrtle; their drapery was the lighteſt and moſt tranſparent: in a word, they were the forms embodied that had glowed in the luxurious, the florid imagination of the Italian poet. Theſe ladies, joined by an adequate number of the moſt intereſting maſques in the room, immediately compoſed a dance previouſly ſtudied for that purpoſe, and which was ſoon increaſed, till it ſtruck into a country dance; and the joyous company danced from the great drawing-room quite out upon the lawn, on each ſide of which there were ranged, parallel to the artificial trees above-mentioned, orange and myrtle, and other odoriferous exotics—garlands of coloured lamps being ſuſpended from one

to the other. This viſta of radiance was cloſed by a ſtatue of Minerva, crowning the buſt of our heaven-born Miniſter, as the political ſaviour of Britain: it was ſurrounded by *tranſparent* paintings, or rather deceptions, of very ingenious contrivance. One repreſented Political Rhetoric in the act of making

The worſer ſeem the better reaſon;

and the other Prudence, inſtigated by Fear, putting a padlock on the lips of Common Senſe; who, not being able to ſpeak, ſeemed to expreſs the pain of this enforced ſilence by menacing contortions, which the company ſeemed to conſider as a mighty good joke.

The

The rareſt delicacies of this and every other country were prepared as a rinfreſco, under a ſuperb tent of white tiſſany, lined with ſky-coloured ſarcenet, placed near this group of emblematic figures: it conſiſted of ices, jellies, conſerves, fruits of all ſorts and ſeaſons; cold meats of every deſcription; poultry and game:—earth, air, and water had been ranſacked to contribute to this moſt elegant *fête!*—After the *gouté*, a band of muſic was called from the adjacent woods, who played the air dear to the heart of every true Briton,

"God ſave the King,"

and a full chorus repeated it three times three. After which, the whole concluded by an aſs-race: the laſt who came in to poſſeſs, as prize, a cap, with a figure of

Moria upon it in coloured foil, which was won, with eaſe, by the Honourable Thomas Titmouſe. After another ſlight refreſhment with liqueurs, the company departed highly gratified by their entertainment, and the ſuavity and complacency of their amiable hoſteſs.

A maſquerade generally produces a great variety of adventures, and almoſt as generally an elopement, or an *enlevement* of the heroine: in the preſent inſtance, however, I chooſe it ſhould be otherwiſe. Nothing is ſo enchanting as novelty—from its name it muſt, of courſe, be the ſoul of a novel; and therefore to give this, at leaſt in one inſtance, I beg leave to relate, that Azemia, though dazzled by the ſplendours of "the ſurrounding ſcenery,"

was

was rather diſtreſſed by the figures that peopled it. The hideous maſks that on every ſide met her eyes, on which were all the deformities that could render diſguſting

"The human face divine."

ſometimes aſtoniſhed, but oftener terrified her. From the flippant pertneſs of ſome of the women, from the inſolent familiarity of many of the men, ſhe ſhrunk in diſmay; and turning from theſe, ſhe met only among the very fine people, mawkiſh ſatiety, or cold indifference; for they were of thoſe, who, while they languidly attempted to ſhew that they were amuſed, betrayed the melancholy truth that they were tired to death.

One figure among this motley group, however, particularly attached himſelf to her: he was clad in a dreſs that he meant ſhould imitate that of an ancient Britiſh bard; and on his head he wore a wreath of oak, and he had put leaf gold on ſome of the leaves, leſt it ſhould fail to be conſpicuous. He bore a ſmall harp in his hand, on which he ſometimes ſtruck chords that ſounded to the ear like harmony; at others he played very ill ſome of the vileſt and moſt unmeaning traſh that ever iſſued from the brain of

"Maudlin Poeteſs, or rhyming Peer!"

This man choſe to follow Azemia wherever ſhe went with the moſt fulſome flattery, till at length ſhe was compelled

pelled to quit the young ladies, with whose party she had been trying to amuse herself, and seek Mrs. Blandford, whom she found sitting alone in an alcove of the garden, somewhat remote from the company; where, though she forbore to say so when our heroine joined her, she had been contemplating the strange and capricious disposition of the things of this world.—"Here," said she, "are a set of people got together to try to be happy—the least nicely dressed, the least expensive among them, probably pays for his or her night's diversion twice as much as would keep for a week a man, his wife, and three or four children, in the necessaries of life.—The lady of the house, who so elegantly entertains her guests, will probably find the amount of her

tasteful hospitality debit her in a sum that would have been a handsome, nay, a great portion, a century and a half ago, for the eldest daughter of her illustrious house; and yet all this is in a country which they say is ruined, and which really is so, if one may judge by the apparent condition of more than two thirds of the people. How many industrious persons, who have laboured all day, shrink supperless to their hard beds, trying to forget in sleep the faintness of hunger! How many mothers by the light of this clear summer moon shining through their scanty, and perhaps broken, casements, gaze on their sleeping children with aching hearts, uncertain if, with the coming day, they shall be able to find for these unconscious sharers of their poverty that

subsistence,

ſubſiſtence, which half the expenditure of one of theſe gay individuals that are now glancing about before me, would have amply ſupplied, not for one only, but for many days!"

Such were the contemplations of Mrs. Blandford; but ſuch contemplations were totally unneceſſary on the Levant, and Azemia had not been long enough in England to have learned to make them, nor did her protectreſs wiſh that ſhe ſhould.

All Azemia's wiſhes at preſent, therefore, went to the ſhaking off her importunate new acquaintance, who had inſiſted upon being allowed to be called her bard; ſung ſongs, ſuch as they were, in her praiſe; and quoted com-

mon-place ſpeeches with a vehemence of voice and manner that had very much diſtreſſed her.

When they joined Mrs. Blandford, his adulation took a more quiet and more ſentimental turn: he walked with her, acquieſced in every thing ſhe ſaid, praiſed her ſentiments, and extolled her taſte to the ſkies. At length, he prevailed on the two ladies to ſuffer him to attend them to the ſideboard, where in a manner, *tout patelin*, which, as Mrs. Blandford did not know the man, ſhe was not upon her guard againſt, he begged leave to toaſt with them the friend moſt eſteemed by both the ladies. Mrs. Blandford, half laughing at the obſolete vulgarity of the propoſal, agreed, however, to humour it, for

the

the absurd *fanfaron* sort of manner of the bard with his harp amused her.—She gave, therefore, a celebrated orator, in whose praise the son of Apollo very eloquently held forth; and then turning to Azemia with an odd sort of smirk on his face, he gently entreated her to favour him with hers.

Mrs. Blandford having explained to her what was desired, because she had only imperfectly comprehended it, Azemia in the simplicity of her heart, and because she in truth liked nobody better, gave Charles Arnold.

Our bard now affected to be struck with the greatest pleasure and surprise: he repeated rapturously the name of Charles Arnold, at the same time declaring,

claring, that he was the beloved companion of his childhood (though Azemia, who now ſaw his face, could not imagine how that could be), and the cheriſhed friend of his youth. He then, ſoliciting the ladies to ſit with him on an artificial bank, covered with green velvet to imitate moſs, under one of the beautiful orange-trees on the lawn, ſpoke thus—having introduced his *eloge* by an harangue in praiſe of humanity and ſenſibility:

"My invaluable friend Arnold has always been the moſt tender-hearted of human beings. I have attended to the dawn of his being—I remember when we both rode hobby-horſes together, (though I was a little his ſenior, I ſtill, as indeed I have always done ſince,

loved

loved a canter on that amiable contrivance); I ſay that in our infantine ſports I watched the progreſs of the ſacred ſpring of Pity's heavenly dew, which has ſince ſpouted forth a fountain of living water—(even ſuch as ſprang from the rock at the call of Moſes)—and who, like him, was always ſo full of "the milk of human kindneſs!" Was a lamb to be domeſticated—to him it was given; and not its own woolly mama could nurſe the firſtling better (except in the article of lacteal nouriſhment, which was happily ſupplied by ſkim milk.)—Was a calf to be hobbed—to him, to my beloved Charles, was delegated the tender taſk of hobbation; and through his fiſts (little fiſts they were then) was imbibed the nouriſhment of the lowing orphan. Io herſelf

hardly

hardly made a more dulcet nurſe. Was a brood of young turkeys to be reared—it was he—he himſelf, my ſoft-hearted friend, that gave each of the plaintive neſtlings an exhilarating pepper-corn: it was he who fed them with chopped eggs, and mingled clivers with their ſnowy curd!

"Was a chicken neglected, pecked, ill-treated by its mother—my dear Charles wrapped it in flannel, put it in a ſmall baſket, and endeavoured by ſuſpenſion near the fire's genial warmth to ſupply the animal heat of its unnatural parent!

"Had that parent the pip—he forgot her inhumanity, and thought only of her diſtreſs: he opened the oil-containing bag

bag with his beſt knife—he cured, he releaſed her.

"Never, dear friend! ſhall I forget his tenderneſs—his ſenſibility towards a gudgeon—he had caught it. The innocent piſcatory ſufferer looked piteouſly up in his face; ſtruck with the pathetic appeal, he obſerved to me—'My Courtney,' ſaid he, 'this fated fiſh may have friends—may have connections in this limpid ſtream: nay, he may even have ſome amiable, ſome ſilver-ſpotted maiden gudgeon waiting his arrival, under the roots of that willow!—An oyſter, *we know*, may be in love, and a gudgeon, of courſe liable, be more diſtractedly enamoured in proportion to his ſuperiority of ſuſceptibility;—but while I expatiate my prey expires.'

expires.'—So ſaying, he releaſed the unoffending fiſh—it glided away, and in that moment, what muſt have been his generous feelings? Amiable youth! my heart glows with participating ſympathy—Humanity marked him for her own, and he has honoured her adoption.''

The oddity of this oration extremely amuſed Mrs. Blandford, who was not without a taſte for humour and ſingularity of character. The converſation, however, of the *ſoi-diſant* bard, (whoſe name, out of maſquerade, was Perkly,) was of that deſcription, which, though it entertains even by its abſurdity for a few hours, varies afterwards, and not unfrequently makes the liſteners repent the attention they at firſt gave, if it

ſeems

ſeems to occaſion repeated claims for the ſame exertion of complaiſance.

Mrs. Blandford, therefore, gave no encouragement to Mr. Perkly, when he ſaid with great apparent delight, that he was now on a ſummer tour among his friends, and that he was ſo fortunate as to be going the next day the ſame way, as that which led towards her reſidence in Hertfordſhire, and would ſet out at the ſame day and ſame hour, in order to have the ſupreme felicity of eſcorting her and Azemia on their way.

The next day came, and a fatigued and heavy-eyed party of the gueſts aſſembled at an elegant breakfaſt, where, after the delights of the preceding evening had been diſcuſſed, the converſa-

tion

tion would have languiſhed, had not ſome of the company, and particularly Mr. Perkly, produced ſundry efforts of their muſes in the forms of rebuſes and charades—happy and fortunate reſources againſt thoſe awkward ſuſpenſions of ideas which ſometimes occur in the very beſt ſociety.

To accommodate ſuch of my readers who may occaſionally be bored with the blank and comfortleſs ſenſation of having nothing to ſay (when they have no maſquerade to talk of and no entertaining novel, like this, to recommend to their auditors)—I here ſet down from memory ſome of theſe intereſting *jeux d'eſprit.*

CHARADE

CHARADE, BY VISCOUNT ******.

My firſt is rude, ſtormy, and windy,
My ſecond, ſoft tender and blue :
O Celia ! if you were but kind, eh !
How bleſt might the whole be with you !

ANOTHER, BY MR. PERKLY,

More remarkable for the propriety of the ſentiment than for harmony of numbers.

My firſt I cannot name to ears polite,
My ſecond was my character laſt night :
When we adopt my whole, and ceaſe to fight,
I hope, with all my heart, things will come right.

An odd-looking man, with a black cropped head, and rather a ſtern countenance, who had long ſat ſilent, and ſomewhat ſulky, then deſired the attention of the company to a new one of his which,

which, notwithſtanding an angry look from the lady of the houſe, he produced, and which was to this effect:

If I *could* do my firſt,
I would ſoon from his ſtation
My ſecond diſplace
For the good of the nation
And then in my tout
I would make an oration.

Either the Counteſs was a remarkable good gueſſer at charades, or had heard this before. However that was, ſhe aroſe in apparent diſpleaſure; and ſaying her ponies were waiting to take her an airing round the park, thoſe who were returning to their reſpective homes that morning took leave, and the company diſperſed.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

If every juſt Man, that now pines with want,
Had but a ſeemly and ſufficient ſhare
Of that which lewdly pamper'd luxury
Now heaps upon ſome few with vaſt exceſs!

MILTON.

MRS. Blandford and Azemia now ſet forth to return home, not in the carriage of the former, for it had been left in London to be new lined and painted; it was an hack poſt-chaiſe that conveyed Azemia and her maternal friend, while Mr. Perkly, who was, he ſaid, going

going the ſame way, ambled by their ſide on a pony.

They had proceeded about half way, when the poſtillion ſtopped ſuddenly, and, diſmounting in a great hurry, went to the hind wheel of the carriage, and preſently, with marks of concern, informed the ladies that the linch pin was loſt, and there was danger of their being overturned if they did not get out. Mr. Perkly, riding up at the ſame time, deſired leave to hand them out into a neighbouring cottage which appeared under a group of tall elms and walnut trees, about fifty paces farther, where the road receded, forming a ſort of green, behind which roſe a woody hill. The look of the place was inviting, it would have made a ſweet landſcape;

and

and Mrs. Blandford willingly agreed to ſit down on a bench at the door, till ſome remedy could be found for the defect in the vehicle. They approached; but the ſun, as it was now about two o'clock, was very oppreſſive, and as the trees threw their ſhade on the other ſide the hedge, Mrs. Blandford pulled the ſtring of the latch, and, followed by Azemia, entered the cottage.

She was ſurpriſed to ſee only a very old woman, quite paralytic, and very deaf, who held in her feeble arms a new-born infant, while a little creature, not two years old, was hanging on her gown, and expreſſing, as well as it could, its want of food, which the poor old woman was apparently preparing for it, over a few embers, in an earthen pot.

Mrs. Blandford, whoſe appearance and queſtions ſeemed to make little impreſſion on this half-ſenſeleſs being, learned, with ſome difficulty, that ſhe was the mother of a poor woman, who had the day before been delivered of the little infant, her eighth child: the father, ſhe ſaid, was out at work four miles off—the eldeſt boy only at ſervice. The ſecond was gone to tell the doctor, who lived ſix miles off, that his mother was very ill, and to get her ſome doctor's ſtuff: the eldeſt girl was ſent to beg ſome linen of a charitable lady, but ſhe lived at a great houſe ſtill farther diſtant. The ſecond girl was nurſing her mother, and her third and fourth ſiſters, who were both ſick in the ſame room, with what the old woman termed a *deſpert* bad faver; and the

mother

mother herſelf, ſhe ſaid, had taſted nothing that day but a little tay; for that, till James comed back, they had not a bit of bread in the houſe.

Affected by this account, and the extreme poverty which every thing within this abode exhibited, Mrs. Blandford deſired to ſee the poor woman; and taking in her arms the new-born infant, which its infirm grandmother ſeemed incapable of carrying ſafely, ſhe followed her trembling ſteps up a ſteep-ſtair to a room, where a ſpectacle of ſickneſs and want preſented itſelf that wrung her heart.

The mother, pale and faint for want of neceſſary nouriſhment, and on a wretched bed, was half raiſed from it,

ſurveying one of her children, a girl of five years old, who ſeemed to be in extremity; while in a corner of the room, on a few rags, lay another girl about ſeven. Mrs. Blandford preſently perceived that the complaint of the children was a low fever, the effect of bad nouriſhment; and that the mother, between the anxiety of her mind and the weakneſs of her ſituation, would too probably periſh. Her pallid countenance, her ſunken eyes and parched lips were evidences too ſtrong of her ſufferings; and Mrs. Blandford, always active in benevolence, was eager to give this ſad group immediate relief.

This, however, was by no means eaſy. This lone cottage was the only one within three or four miles, and the

neareſt were not likely to ſupply any of the articles neceſſary for theſe poor objects: it was ſo far to the town, that before any meſſenger could be ſent and return, the evils ſhe wiſhed to remove might become irremediable. What was to be done? In ſuch a caſe, all conſideration for her perſonal convenience was forgotten by this excellent woman—ſhe endeavoured to comfort the languid ſufferer with aſſurances of ſpeedy relief; then, haſtening down, ſhe went to the place where Mr. Perkly and her ſervant were aſſiſting the poſtillion to remedy the defect of the wheel, which, it appeared, was of more ſerious conſequence than they had at firſt imagined, inaſmuch as the wheel itſelf was broke. Mrs. Blandford now deſired the poſtillion to mount

one of the horſes, and haſten to a neighbouring town. The man grumbled, and demurred. Mrs. Blandford, however, inſiſted; and though Mr. Perkly obſerved that it would be better to ſend her own ſervant, yet, as he was mounted on a favourite old horſe, ſhe refuſed to alter her intentions, and, after a long argument, in which Perkly gave his opinion with more freedom than Mrs. Blandford thought his acquaintance with her authoriſed, the poſtillion departed; and Perkly, who ſeemed to think this delay an inconvenience to himſelf, was very coolly told by Mrs. Blandford, who was already tired of his poor attempts at wit, and his hypocritical parade of ſentiment, that there was not the leaſt neceſſity for her to reſtrain him,

and

and that he had much better go his own way, ſince it was very uncertain how long ſhe might ſtay.

Mr. Perkly, who had reaſons of his own for wiſhing to keep that ſhare of Mrs. Blandford's favour which he imagined he had obtained, now began to change his tone; and the good lady, who could not imagine what motive he could have for his uncommon attention, which he paid principally to her (for of Azemia he took little notice), was for once, notwithſtanding her natural intelligence, and the judgment ſhe had acquired in a long intercourſe with the world, induced to believe that he really found pleaſure in her converſation.

Willing, therefore, to make it as instructive as pleasurable, she began, as they all sat together on the bench near the cottage door, waiting the return of the postillion, to enter into a disquisition on the various conditions of men in a state of civilized society. This was begun by Mr. Perkly's saying—"You seem much interested, Madam, for these poor people."—"Should I not be destitute of feeling, were I otherwise?" said Mrs. Blandford. "Can I do otherwise than consider them as beings formed with the same feelings, and liable to the same necessities as I am? And can I, after having been lately in a scene of such luxurious profusion, help being shocked to think, that, while a person like our hostess of last night can, for a few hours amusement,

amuſement, expend a ſum that would make many families happy for years, there is, within a few miles of her ſplendid abode, a poor induſtrious group, a father and mother, an aged grandmother, and ſo many children, who are actually liable to periſh for want of the mere neceſſaries of exiſtence?"

"But, my dear Madam," cried Mr. Perkly, eagerly.

"And, my dear Sir," interrupted Mrs. Blandford, "I know every thing you would ſay. The common-place, and, pardon me if I ſay, the unfeeling objections that have a thouſand times been made, and a thouſand times incontrovertibly anſwered—I mean to the me-

lioration of the condition of the lower ranks in this country."

"Good God!" exclaimed Mr. Perkly, "is it poſſible that a woman of your ſenſe—of your underſtanding, can, for a moment, allow yourſelf to be ſo miſled by the nonſenſical clamour of the multitude, as to imagine that a plan could ever ſucceed that went to univerſal equalization?"

"No, Sir," ſaid Mrs. Blandford coolly, "I do *not* join in that clamour. I know, and ſo does every body of common ſenſe, that equality, according to the ſenſe you affect to annex to it, cannot exiſt: but there ought to be equal laws for all men."

"And

"And *are* there not?" cried Perkly, eagerly. "Is there a country under Heaven where law is ſo equally dealt as it is in ours? Is there not juſtice to be had for every body?"

"Juſtice!" anſwered Mrs. Blandford. "Oh! mockery of terms! You may as well ſay to the wretched pauper who beſeeches in the ſtreet your charity to relieve his hunger—'Friend, why are you hungry? There is a tavern open on the oppoſite ſide of the way, where you may eat your fill.'—Would not this be a barbarous inſult to the poor mendicant's diſtreſs?—Yet it is preciſely thus people talk who urge to the oppreſſed in common life the excellence, the equality of the Engliſh law.—'It is very excellent, I dare ſay,' might the

ſufferer reply, 'but I have no means of buying it; for, whatever it can do for me, I muſt pay ſo high, that, if peradventure I get relieved from the oppreſſion I complain of, I ſhall be as much impoveriſhed as I am now.'—No, never talk, my good Sir, of the equality of our laws, while a Chancery-ſuit is ranked as an evil of as great magnitude as a fire, an inundation, a deſcent of the enemy, or an earthquake; and really as to the ruin they produce, I ſee but little difference—what difference there is, is rather againſt a Chancery-ſuit: the invaſion, inundation, earthquake, may render a family houſeleſs and deſolate at once; a Chancery-ſuit keeps them in lingering miſery for years, and leaves them beggars at laſt."

"Well,

"Well, well," ſaid Mr. Perkly, who felt, though he determined not to own it, that he had hitherto the worſt of the argument; "well, well, but . . . . that . . . a . . that . . . a . . is not . . . a . . . my meaning. No, no—I mean, dear Madam, *that* equality of property, or, as we ſay, the Agrarian Law, about which ſo much nonſenſe has been talked."

"I do not know," anſwered Mrs. Blandford, "that it might always be ſuch abſolute nonſenſe, however impracticable it is in the preſent ſtate of ſociety. That it is impracticable, I believe: if any twelve mechanics, for example, of nearly as can be, in ſuch numbers, the ſame age, intellects, and information, as well as the ſame bodily powers, were each to have a certain portion of land

aſſigned them, with inſtruments of huſbandry to work, and grain to ſow their fields, you would ſee that ſome would be ignorant, ſome idle, ſome, perhaps, unfortunate and unſuſpecting; ſo that, before two years had paſſed, the ſagacious, the induſtrious, the fortunate, the cunning, would have poſſeſſed themſelves of their neighbour's property; and theſe would have two, three, or more ſhares, while the idle and diſſipated would be entirely bereft of theirs, and then, of courſe, there muſt be an end to the equality with which they ſet out."

"Such men then," ſaid Mr. Perkly, "would be impoveriſhed through their own folly."

"Moſt

"Moſt of them, undoubtedly."

"And yet," cried he, exultingly, "you feel a great deal of pity for the poor; and ſeem to think that thoſe who have great affluence are never to enjoy themſelves in any elegant amuſement, becauſe there may happen to be poor people in the world?"

"Not ſo," replied Mrs. Blandford; "it would be requiring of human creatures virtuous ſelf-denial, which I cannot expect in civilized, or perhaps any other ſociety. All I mean is, that when the thinking mind is ſhocked by ſuch ſtriking diſparity as between the ſcene I was in laſt night, and what I now witneſs paſſing in this houſe, it is very apt to advert to the great nations where

ſuch

ſuch ſymptoms were the forerunners of dreadful convulſions. It is a diſeaſe which we know from repeated experience is fatal: I would prevent its being ſo here; I would not have the rich live much worſe than they do, but I would have the poor ſupported a great deal better."

"I don't ſee that they want any thing," ſaid Mr. Perkly, careleſsly, "or if they do, 'tis only becauſe they are drunken, or idle."

"Would to God," exclaimed Mrs. Blandford, "that you, Sir, who have, as you ſay, no wife or family, were compelled to live, for one month only, on the ſum that, during that ſpace, ſupplies the labouring owner of this cabin, his

his wife, mother, and ſeven or eight children, with all the means of life! Believe me, good Sir, you would find yourſelf moſt terribly ſtraitened; and you would then, perhaps, own, that the poor are not quite ſo well off as they ought to be in a country of whoſe proſperity thoſe that live on the fat of the land ſo ſedulouſly endeavour to convince us."

Mr. Perkly ſtared, and ſhook his ears at this, as if he was not quite eaſy at hearing even the remoteſt hint of ſuch an experiment.

The meſſenger ſoon after returned with the ſupplies directed by the benevolence of Mrs. Blandford, who gave another

another hour to feeing them difpofed of for the comfort and relief of the poor family. She then renewed her journey with a grumbling poftillion, and one tired horfe, Mr. Perkly looking fometimes as if he repented of his having thus volunteered in the fervice of one whofe feeling, or affectation of feeling, made his gallantry tedious and troublefome; for, not content with having fupplied the poor family with neceffaries, Mrs. Blandford ftopped at the next town, where fhe hired a nurfe to attend on the fick woman, and engaged an apothecary to vifit her and the children. Before all this could be completed, the night was advanced when they arrived at Mrs. Blandford's home—Perkly feemed to wifh to be invited to ftay; but, wearied by his attempts at wit, and

difgufted

disgusted by the many proofs she had seen of real insensibility, under the affectation of refined sentimentality, Mrs. Blandford made no pretence of wishing his presence. Having strutted about therefore a quarter of an hour, and affected to admire her house and garden, he departed, as he said, for the abode of a friend, about four miles nearer London, who had given him a pressing invitation to stay some time; while Mrs. Blandford, fatigued with her excursion, was consoled for her lost time by the consideration that she had, in consequence of it, found an opportunity effectually to relieve a distressed family.—Azemia, extremely glad to find herself once more in the comfortable home of her benefactress, formed no

other

other wiſh than that they might, during the reſt of the ſummer, have no invitation, or at leaſt accept of none to leave it.

As to a maſquerade, ſhe beſought Mrs. Blandford, while they breakfaſted the next morning, never to take her to another.—"It is," ſaid ſhe in her broken Engliſh, "ſuch a melancholy ſight to ſee ſuch a number of people making ſimpletons of themſelves by way of trying at ſomething extraordinary, which, after all, ſeems to amuſe none of them. I could not help being quite ſorry to look at ſome of them dreſſed up ſo little like reaſonable beings, and ſqueaking nonſenſe, with ſuch deformed maſks on, that they ſeemed to try both

in

in their minds and perſons to libel human nature."

Sagacious reader!—and Oh! more formidable critic! do not here ſhut the book, and exclaim that ſuch reflections are not in character, and never were made by a girl of ſeventeen, and a ſtranger.—Conſider whether, if they are not natural, they are juſt, and remember that the heroine of a novel is a privileged perſon, who is to do and endure what never was done or ſuffered in real life. She may faſt four or five days, or as long as Elizabeth Canning: ſhe may ride over hills, through woods, and round lakes, nights and days, and be no worſe at the end of her journey, than if ſhe had taken an airing

to

to Kenſington with her grandmother; and ſhe may make reflections worthy of a Lord Chancellor, or an Archbiſhop, though it is well known that in actual life beautiful young ladies very ſeldom reflect at all.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

So Pluto ſeized on Proſerpine.

IT was two months after this time, and ſummer was gradually fading into autumn, when Mrs. Blandford was ſuddenly ſummoned to London to meet an old friend, who, after a long reſidence in the Weſt Indies, had returned to England in ſo bad a ſtate of health, that ſhe was unable to leave London, as ſhe was deſired to do, for Bath; and finding herſelf daily become worſe, ſhe

deſired

deſired to ſee her oldeſt and beſt friend, and to give her ſome directions about her family, before ſhe became too ill to execute theſe taſks of duty and prudence.—Mrs. Blandford loſt not a moment in obeying the ſummons—it was likely that ſhe ſhould be abſent only a few days; and as Azemia wiſhed rather to remain, unleſs ſhe could be uſeful, and Mrs. Blandford was unwilling to take her, it was agreed that ſhe ſhould be left in the country.

Mrs. Blandford then departed; and Azemia, who now found the advantage of the reſources ſhe had acquired, taſted reading well enough to amuſe herſelf many hours: then, the evening being remarkably cloſe and warm, ſhe ſtrolled towards a ſmall lawn that partly

ſurrounded

ſurrounded the houſe, but had hardly proceeded many paces before a ſervant from the houſe, following her, informed her Mr. Perkly was come, and deſired to ſpeak to her. Azemia diſliked this man at all times, but particularly diſliked to ſee him in the abſence of Mrs. Blandford: ſhe was not, however, well enough acquainted with the numerous ways there are of eſcaping importunate viſitors, and therefore returned, though reluctantly, into the houſe, where Perkly had viſited three or four times ſince their meeting at Lady Buckray's, though Mrs. Blandford had been very far from giving him encouragement.—Azemia now thought him more importunate and diſagreeable than ever; he aſked a thouſand queſtions, ſuch as the name of the lady to whom Mrs. Blandford was gone,

the ſtreet where ſhe lived, how long the viſit was likely to be, and many other interrogatories, which, though ſhe always thought him impertinent, now ſeemed more ſo than ever.

Azemia at length took courage to tell him, that as Mrs. Blandford was abſent, ſhe could not aſk him to ſtay; and, with great ſatisfaction, ſhe ſaw him depart.

The next morning ſhe went out to attend on ſome India pheaſants, for which a ſmall wooded corner of the garden had been netted off; when ſhe was ſurpriſed by a note from Mrs. Blandford, written, as it ſeemed, in great diſtreſs of mind. It was to inform her that her friend was worſe, and that, as

ſhe

ſhe was herſelf unwell, ſhe could not diſpenſe with the attendance of her dear Azemia; and begging that ſhe would therefore ſet out for London immediately in her friend's poſt-chaiſe, which was ſent for her. Azemia flew into the houſe, forgot all her diſlike to going to London; and calling the houſemaid to aſſiſt her in packing a few neceſſaries, (for Mrs. Blandford's own maid had accompanied her miſtreſs) ſhe was ready in a few moments; and, with a mind ill at eaſe on account of the indiſpoſition of her beloved benefactreſs, got into the handſome poſt-chaiſe that waited, and, attended by a creditable ſervant in livery on horſeback who had come with it, began her journey.

The day was exceſſively warm, and their progreſs ſlow: Azemia began to think it extremely tedious. The chaiſe ſtopped at a little alehouſe by the road-ſide to refreſh the horſes, and Azemia ventured to enquire of the ſervant how far they yet had to London. The man aſſured her they would ſoon arrive there; adding, as a reaſon for the time they had taken, that, to avoid ſome ſandy and hilly road, the poſtillion had come round an eaſier way, which beſides gave them the advantage of getting into London by a quarter of the town nearer to Mrs. Anderton's houſe, by which means they would avoid going over the ſtones for above a mile.

Azemia ſuppoſed all this perfectly true; yet a ſenſe of the great difference

of

of the time taken up in this and her former journey ſoon recurred to her again, as ſlowly they travelled on in very ſhaking roads. The ſun was now ſunk; it became dark; and Azemia, who had never till then had much idea of fear, began to feel uncomfortable when ſhe reflected that ſhe was alone in a very lonely, and, as it now ſeemed, in a ſort of wild and woody country; for ſhe obſerved by the twilight that the carriage had left the road and enclofed lanes, and was driven over graſs among thickets of trees: ſhe thought it neceſſary to ſpeak again; for, by all ſhe recollected of the approach to the metropolis, nothing could be more unlike it than the place where they then were. It was ſome time before the poſtillion heard; and when, at laſt, he

ſtopped, he anſwered ſomewhat ſullenly, that it would not be long before they got to the place where they were going to. Azemia, ſtill more terrified, as well by the man's rude anſwer as by obſerving they were going into a darker part of the foreſt by a narrow road, deſired to ſpeak with the other ſervant. The poſtillion anſwered, in a yet more ſurly way, that he was gone on before. Azemia then aſked whither?—and if he was gone to London?—The fellow made no anſwer.

Impenetrable darkneſs now fell around, and the road appeared to be ſo bad, that the chaiſe was likely every moment to be overturned: at length, however, after being for about half an hour ſhaken among ruts that threatened

diſlocated

diſlocated limbs, the motion of the carriage became eaſier; ſhe ſaw lights move about in a houſe before her, gates were opened, and ſhe was ſoon at the door, where the ſervant who had attended her from Mrs. Blandford's opened the door of the chaiſe, and deſired her to alight.—"Oh! pray," exclaimed ſhe, "tell me why I am brought hither?—This is not London?—Mrs. Blandford cannot be here?"

No anſwer was returned: Azemia was led into a large handſome room; a female ſervant appeared—and, ſpeaking loud, as if becauſe ſhe was a foreigner ſhe could not hear, ſaid that the lady ſhe belonged to would be there to-morrow; that in the mean-time ſhe muſt eat her ſupper, and go to bed.

The woman ſpoke to Azemia exactly as ſhe would to a child of ten years old, and ſeemed to aſſume an authority which added to the alarm ſhe had already conceived—fears of ſhe knew not what. She ſpoke as well as ſhe could to the woman; but her apprehenſion occaſioned her to expreſs herſelf with more difficulty than uſual, and the only anſwer ſhe obtained was—"Ah! well, well; there, there—I don't underſtand you. I warrant you ben't much hurt in being brought to ſuch a houſe as this here. Come, Miſs, no whimpering!—What!—I wonders what you have to complain on indeed!"

Azemia, finding her remonſtrance of no uſe, remained quiet; the woman went away, and the fair young priſoner

began

began to explore the precincts to which ſhe was confined.—The room wherein ſhe was left opened by a large mahogany door into another ſtill larger—it ſeemed to be magnificently furniſhed with large pictures; it was carpeted, and the curtains were of the richeſt damaſk, with gilt cornices. The candle Azemia held in her hand caſt but a feeble light around ſo large an apartment; the doubtful obſcurity diſmayed her, and ſhe returned, with light ſteps, to the room ſhe had left, where a female ſervant, a ſort of houſekeeper, whom ſhe had before ſeen, appeared, laid a cloth on a ſmall table, and made ſigns to Azemia to ſeat herſelf, and to eat of the jellies, paſtry, and fruit, with which it was covered.

Without any diſtinct notion of the cauſes ſhe might have for perſonal alarm, the greateſt uneaſineſs Azemia felt was on account of Mrs. Blandford. Why ſhould ſhe have written to her as ſhe did? or if, as ſhe began to ſuppoſe, there was any deception in it, for what purpoſe, and by whom, could ſhe have been thus drawn away from the protection of Mrs. Blandford? and what muſt her beloved benefactreſs think when ſhe learned that ſhe was gone!

Theſe reflections, and the vague fears that tormented her, kept her waking the whole night on the bed of down to which ſhe had been conducted. At the dawn of day, which ſhe watched through the gilt window-ſhutters and chintz curtains of her room, ſhe aroſe,

and

and opened them. She ſaw that the houſe on that ſide was ſituated in a large and beautiful garden: a gravel walk, bordered with variety of flowering ſhrubs and foreſt trees, led round an extenſive lawn to a canal edged with weeping willow, and winding away till it was loſt among plantations apparently of conſiderable extent. Azemia, having dreſſed herſelf, intended to go down ſtairs and walk in the pleaſant grounds ſhe ſaw before her: but, on attempting to leave her room, ſhe found the door locked; and in a few moments afterwards ſhe was amazed and alarmed by the appearance of Miſs Sally!—a perſon who was almoſt expelled from her recollection, but who now, diſagreeably enough, was recalled to it. Her chubby white face ſeemed

ſwelled with malignant triumph: ſhe addreſſed herſelf to Azemia with a ſneering reproach for her eſcape, and treated her like a creature over whom ſhe had obtained a right and might to diſpoſe of as ſhe pleaſed. Her manner was enough to overcome the ſpirits of the innocent girl, who, recollecting all that Mrs. Blandford had endeavoured to impreſs upon her mind as to the former conduct of this woman and of her firſt captor, was ſtruck with dread of their preſent deſigns, and burſt into tears.—Miſs Sally, without feeling or pity, continued to exclaim on her ingratitude and her folly: ſhe added—"However, Miſs, you are now come back to thoſe you belong to; you are far enough from the impertinent meddling old woman who choſe to keep

you

you from your right friends; and *they* will take care, I aſſure you, that you ſhall not ſet out on your travels again in a hurry."

Azemia, weeping bitterly, enquired if ſhe might not be permitted to walk in the garden.—"Yes, yes, you ſhall walk, never fear; but you'll have no opportunity here to walk away. Come, no whimpering—you'll ſpoil your pretty eyes, Miſs: I adviſe you to make yourſelf eaſy, or, I aſſure you, it will be worſe for you."

To prevent my readers forming various conjectures as to the preſent ſituation of *our* heroine, they are to know, that, at the maſquerade, a certain celebrated

lebrated Political Orator and Writer had appeared as Peter the Hermit, while, among other Crusaders and chivalrous Knights assembled round him, was the noble Duke mentioned in the first part of these memoirs, who forbore to unmask the whole night, and whose presence was known only to the lady of the house. He no sooner beheld Azemia, and discovered that she was the lovely Turk once an inmate of his house, than he felt the most unconquerable wish to get her again in his power. Mr. Perkly had long been one of his accommodating friends: he immediately received instructions to make an acquaintance with Mrs. Blandford, and what had followed was by his contrivance. Azemia being a person belonging

longing to nobody, and kept, as was ſuppoſed, by Mrs. Blandford through charity, it was believed that none would think it worth while to enquire about her; or, if they did, that none poſſeſſed any right to reclaim her.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

From bad to worſe too oft the Sufferer falls,
Yet let no Sufferer for that cauſe deſpair:
Good out of evil, Deſtiny oft calls—
Which we ſee not—Alas! how blind we are!

ANONYMOUS.

THE amazement and conſternation of Mrs. Blandford, when ſhe returned to her own houſe, are not to be deſcribed. She made, in vain, every enquiry in her power of her ſervants, and then every attempt to trace her unfortunate ward, but all in vain: no perſon could give

give any account of the chaiſe, or its attendants; and, in fact, it had been driven a croſs road, for near twenty miles, to the foreſt on which this villa of the Duke's was ſituated, though it was not much more than that diſtance from London.

While Mrs. Blandford was tormented with the moſt uneaſy conjectures as to the fate of poor Azemia, which increaſed in proportion as time went on, the noble owner of her priſon thought proper to viſit his beautiful priſoner.

Azemia, who had for ſome days ceaſed to regard the occaſional inſults of Miſs Sally, and was for the greateſt part of her time left at liberty to walk

in

in the plantations, or amuſe herſelf as ſhe choſe, and who ſaw no perſon appear to alarm her, was become more tranquil; and, not knowing the precautions that had been taken to elude all ſearch, flattered herſelf that Mrs. Blandford would ſoon diſcover her, and that ſhe ſhould once more be reſtored to her protection. Her diſpoſition was naturally cheerful and ſanguine; and her imagination was uninfluenced by ſuch reading as tells of

"Moving accidents by flood or field;"

ſhewing how damſels have been ſpirited off, and ſhut up by ſundry evil-diſpoſed gentlemen—a circumſtance which is hardly omitted in any novel ſince the confinement of Pamela at Mr. B—'s

houſe

houſe in Lincolnſhire, and the *enlevement* of Miſs Byron by Sir Hargrave Pollexfen.

Of all thoſe hiſtories, and of thoſe of modern romances, wherein ladies are carried per force into caſtles, and ſcud about woods by moonlight to eſcape, Azemia was happily ignorant; ſo that ideal grievances added but little, for ſome time, to the real one of being ſeparated from Mrs. Blandford, and occaſionally compelled to endure the impertinence of Miſs Sally.

But when the venerable nobleman arrived, and, conſidering her as ignorant even of the language he uſed, ſurveyed her as he would a beautiful animal, then with a moſt ridiculous, yet diſguſt-

ing

ing expreſſion of admiration, approached and took her hand, Azemia became immediately conſcious of the fate to which ſhe was condemned, and, acquiring at once courage to repel the inſults which ſhe thought it would be too probable he might offer, told him in a calmer tone than could be expected, that ſhe inſiſted on being releaſed; that no perſon had any right to detain her; and that ſhe would inform Mrs. Blandford that he confined her contrary to her inclination.

The Duke heard her with the ſort of ſatisfaction with which one liſtens to an amiable child, who, in its infantine anger, ſhews unexpected marks of ſtrength of mind. He ſeemed aſtoniſhed at the progreſs ſhe had made in ſpeaking

Engliſh;

Engliſh; and in a few days, from mere liking to her beautiful form, he became ſo dotingly fond of her for the energy, as he called it, of her mind, that he no longer approached her but with reſpect; and inſtead of the baſe intentions he had at firſt harboured, he appeared to be diſpoſed to end all his follies by marrying this lovely Aſiatic; and would, perhaps, have done ſo, if, on one hand, he had not been poſitively engaged before to Lady Belinda, and to five equally amiable fair ones; and on the other, if he had not ſoon ſeen, that, while Azemia beheld him with unconquerable averſion, ſhe was totally unmoved by, though ſhe perfectly underſtood, the various advantages of fortune and rank he had the power of offering her.

After

After ſtaying more than a week, the enamoured antiquity, who fancied himſelf more in love than he ever was in his life, returned to London, giving orders that Azémia might not be contradicted in any thing; that all which could amuſe and engage her might be ſupplied, and that ſhe might be allowed to walk in the garden whenever ſhe pleaſed—only that care ſhould be taken ſhe went no farther than about the grounds; which was altogether improbable, as they were ſurrounded on all ſides either by a wall, or a very high paling, within which was a wide and thick plantation of firs, other evergreens, and large trees; while without, next the foreſt, ad eep ditch ran all round beyond the paling. There was no entrance but by a lodge, where the porter knew

how

how to obey the orders that were given him, too well to leave the leaſt doubt of the innocent priſoner's eſcape.

Miſs Sally, fatigued by a cloſe attendance as jailoreſs for almoſt three weeks, and occupied by ſome plans of her own, inſenſibly relaxed her vigilance; and a day or two after the Duke's departure Azemia was ſuffered to wander about as ſhe would. She returned regularly at the hours Miſs Sally expected to ſee her; and it was a relief to the latter not to be under the neceſſity of following her.

The doors of her apartment were now no longer locked; and one evening after ſhe had taken her ſlight repaſt, and retired to it, ſhe obſerved from the windows that the moon ſhone with uncommon

common luſtre: its glancing rays were trembling on the canal, and among the trees that waved over the lawn. Its chequered radiance gave a penſive ſweetneſs to the ſcene, which Azemia deſired to enjoy in the open air.—The ſtairs and paſſages were all carpeted, ſo that her light footſteps were not heard by any one; and ſhe ſoftly unbarred the glaſs door opening on the lawn, which opened afterwards by a ſpring lock, of which ſhe knew the ſecret.

With the feelings of a bird that has regained a momentary liberty, Azemia walked forth; for at all other times, however far ſhe had rambled from the houſe, ſhe always thought herſelf watched. Now ſhe believed ſhe was wholly unobſerved; and the pleaſure

that

that ſuppoſition gave her, counteracted every ſenſation of fear at the ſilence and loneliness of the ſcene, that ſhe might at another time have felt. Approaching the canal, ſhe followed its winding banks, and admired the effect of the moon-beams trembling at intervals among the trees on its ſurface, which was gently curled and agitated by the night breeze, as it ſighed among the woods, that bent and ſwathed as it paſſed them.

Azemia, loſt in a pleaſing ſort of melancholy muſing, walked on towards the darker parts of the lawn, where the trees cloſed over the broad graſs walk leading round to its extremity. No living creatures ſeemed to be abroad but the hares, which at firſt ſtartled her as they darted acroſs her path, on being

 diſturbed

disturbed by her approach. There were an infinite number encouraged and protected here by the noble owner of the domain, who would have punished a peasant, or petty farmer, more severely for destroying one of *them*, than for killing half a dozen parish children. Having observed above twenty of these innocent animals feeding or sporting among the shrubs, the sudden scudding of two or three almost over her feet no longer alarmed her: she even stepped more lightly, if possible, not to break in, even in their timid apprehensions, on the security they appeared to enjoy at this hour of silence, for it was midnight.

Re-assured as to any fears for herself by the perfect tranquillity of every object around her, Azemia, without any intention

intention of eſcaping (for to eſcape ſeemed impoſſible), continued her way. She now entered a darker and narrower wood walk, almoſt at the extremity of the plantation. Several cedars, and curious firs feathered down to the ground, had an area cut round them to admit air, while beyond them laurels and holly, privet and phillyrea, formed beneath the high elms and limes a ſcreen of impenetrable darkneſs; and Azemia could only ſee the moon among theſe receſſes; in the narrow parts it did not even enlighten the path before her. Suddenly, as ſlowly ſhe purſued her way, ſhe was ſomewhat ſtartled by a ſhrill and often repeated cry, not unlike that of a young infant; it ſeemed almoſt cloſe to her: but before ſhe had time to conſider what it might be, three men ruſhed out from

the dark thicket, and darted towards the place from whence the cry ſeemed to proceed. The ſight of a human creature ſeemed to alarm the two laſt, who ſtopped and evidently meant to impede the paſſage of the trembling Azemia; while the third, who had more eagerly purſued his game, ſtepped from among the coppice wood in half a moment, exclaiming with an oath—" I've got another, and a deviliſh large one!"—He held a hare in his hand; and ſeeing his companions, who had by this time ſeized on the half-dead Azemia, he joined in their efforts to carry her out of the grounds; which they preſently effected by means of ſome pales they had ſo looſened, that they could remove them at their pleaſure, and replaced ſo as that it could not be diſcerned that they

were

were loose. These three depredators of the night had no difficulty in conveying their light and almost unresisting burthen across the deep fossé surrounding the grounds; and Azemia was now amidst the pathless wilderness of an extensive chace, in the power of three ruffians, one of whom was a notorious footpad that had long infested the roads round London, and had retired among persons very little better than himself, to subsist with them on poaching and other petty thefts, till the search made for him in and about the metropolis, in consequence of a recent robbery and murder, was a little abated: with them he had associated in setting snares for game, and the cry Azemia heard was that of a hare taken in a wire.

CHAP. XI.

What if our Heroine meet with dire mifchance,
Loft in the mazes of this tangled wood?

READER! if I now chofe, in this my concluding fection, to follow the example of a great mafter, and his ingenious copyift, I might gravely begin a long differtation, and difcourfe admirably and very much to the purpofe as to the probability of what I have juft made my heroine encounter. I will not—no, I pofitively will not take undue advantage

advantage of your impatience to know what becomes of my interesting Azemia. I will recollect how often I have myself impatiently turned over, without reading it, a prosing digression, when I was impatient to learn whether the fair ideal creature, for whom I had suffered myself to be anxious during many chequered pages, was killed or married at their close.

Oh! ye amiable and graceful female readers under twenty, who may perchance peruse this my first essay "in the novel line," as ye wait in your machine till the Nereids in blue flannel at Margate or Brighton shall wade towards you in your turn; or who may take it up in the parlour window while ye wait for your horse, or your sociable—(for

now, alas! the chance a novelist had of being read as your hair was dressed is at an end)—ye will dispense with any argument by which I can prove that my heroine's adventure is extremely probable, if I hasten to relieve ye from the pain your susceptible bosoms must feel, when ye reflect on the situation of my fair, young, innocent and beauteous Azemia, in the hands of three ruffians, in the midst of a wild forest, in the middle of the night, when nothing was so improbable as her being saved from the horrors that awaited her.—To proceed then:

After the three men had carried her out of the plantations, they began to debate how they should dispose of her for the night; and he who was the

most

moſt daring, and of courſe had a ſort of aſcendancy over the others, inſiſted upon their helping him to convey her to the lone cottage, where he was himſelf concealed, which was two miles farther in the foreſt. To this the others objected: but the fiercer wretch pulled a piſtol from his pocket; and knowing they were unarmed, except with hunting poles pointed with iron, he ſwore that the firſt of them that made any reſiſtance to what he directed ſhould have a brace of balls through his body. Azemia, who, a little recovering, had fallen ſenſeleſs on hearing this hideous wretch ſpeak as he did, was borne between the two ſubordinate men, who were only poachers; the other, who was a ruffian of a much more dangerous deſcription, following them with his piſtol in his hand.

Several croſs roads interſected the foreſt, all of which it was impoſſible to avoid in going towards the place where the robber inſiſted on having his prey conveyed. They arrived at a broad green road, where the turf was but little marked by wheels, and were proceeding acroſs it, when the quick approach of horſemen ſtartled them.—Conſcious guilt generally creates cowardice. The youngeſt of the men that bore Azemia let go his hold, and was preſently loſt amid the thickeſt wood: the other was about to conſult his own ſafety, and eſcape alſo, when he was ſeized by the nervous arm of one of the horſemen, while a piſtol diſcharged by the ruffian was inſtantly anſwered by the firing of a piſtol by the other man on horſeback; and then leaping from his horſe, he cut

at

at him with an hanger he wore by his ſide, and, cloſing with him, threw him on the ground—but not till he had himſelf received a ball from another piſtol in his arm. The ſecond poacher had by this time diſappeared; and the ſtranger, ordering his companion, who was his ſervant, to ſecure the fallen robber, ran to the aſſiſtance of the female, who was left lying on the ground, and who was to all appearance dead.

What were the ſenſations of the brave and fortunate champion of innocence in diſtreſs, when he ſaw his Azemia—his long loſt, his adored Azemia! for know, gentle reader, that this young hero was no other than Charles Arnold himſelf.

It would be a vain attempt to deſcribe the ſenſations that crowded on the heart of the gallant young ſeaman, while he thus held in his arms the lifeleſs form of her whom he had ſought at every interval of receſs from his duty, and never a moment ceaſed to think of with paſſionate tenderneſs. His firſt apprehenſions were that ſhe was dead—his firſt hopes to bear away the lovely form from the ruffians, whom he expected every moment to return. He threw himſelf upon the ground by her—ſpoke to her, chafed her cold hands, and then attempted to raiſe her; his faithful ſervant was ſtill employed in ſecuring the diſabled ruffian, who with dreadful execrations ſtruggled to force himſelf from the graſp of honeſt Bat.

"Tie

"Tie his hands behind him," cried Arnold, "and haſten to me, or it will be too late to ſave—to recover this lovely creature." Bat, with difficulty, performed this troubleſome office; and then his maſter mounting his horſe, he lifted Azemia into his arms; and Bat, having ſecured the piſtols that had been ſcattered around this ſcene of ſudden contention, followed on the other horſe.

Azemia, after a few moments, opened her eyes, and Arnold, in the gentleſt accents, endeavoured to prevent the effects of a too ſudden ſurpriſe, while he convinced her, that ſhe was not only in preſent ſafety, but protected by her fondeſt, tendereſt friend. Joy was the momentary ſenſation that affected the heart of Azemia; but it was too ſud-

den

den and tumultuous to aſſiſt her in regaining her ſtrength. She poſſeſſed only recollection enough to cling round the neck of her deliverer, while her head ſunk on his ſhoulder; and in this ſituation, after about an hour's journeying, they arrived at the houſe of the uncle of Charles Arnold, who lived about ſix miles from the place where he had ſo miraculouſly reſcued Azemia from the probability of a fate a thouſand times worſe than death.

Arnold, who was always welcome at his uncle's houſe, and had been uſed to go thither whenever, arriving from ſea, he had a ſhort leave of abſence, made no ſcruple of rapping loudly at the door; where, however, they waited ſome time before the family were rouſed. At length

the

the truſty old houſekeeper looked out of the window; and hearing the voice of Arnold, who was a great favourite with every body in the houſe, ſhe called up the reſt of the ſervants, and haſtened down herſelf to open the door.

This good gentlewoman, an ancient ſpinſter, who had been educated rather above what is uſual in her ſtation, was amazed at ſeeing her maſter's nephew appear, bearing between him and his ſervant a young woman, whoſe uncommon beauty, notwithſtanding the ſituation ſhe was in, gave the prudent houſekeeper the greateſt alarm for the diſcretion of her young favourite, Mr. Arnold.

Arnold,

Arnold, in a hurried voice, and ſomewhat impatiently, anſwered the queſtions ſhe put to him; then entreating her not to loſe a moment in talking, but to attend the young lady to a bed, and call up one of the maid ſervants to aſſiſt in procuring what might be neceſſary to her refreſhment and comfort, he flew to his uncle, and, awakening him without ſcruple, related in a few words all that had happened—not diſguiſing from him, that the young creature he had ſo providentially reſcued was the ſame Turkiſh beauty who had, about fourteen months before, made ſo deep an impreſſion on his heart, for which, whenever they had ſince met, his uncle had rallied him without mercy.

Mr.

Mr. Winyard (ſo was this worthy man called) knew Charles Arnold too well to ſuppoſe, that, under this ſtory, he concealed one of thoſe frolics in which young men ſometimes indulge themſelves; he therefore rang for his houſekeeper, and gave her ſtrict orders to take the utmoſt care of the young lady: then bidding his nephew attend to his own refreſhment and repoſe (for he looked extremely pale and fatigued), the good man betook himſelf to recover his ſleep, and poſtponed till the next morning the enquiry that ſomewhat puzzled him, by what ſtrange chance a young woman could be found in the middle of the night in the power of three ruffians, and in ſuch a place.

He

He knew nothing of the wound Charles Arnold had received, or he would have been much more diſquieted. Our hero was himſelf hardly ſenſible of it, while any thing remained to be done in the ſervice of Azemia: but as ſoon as he found her completely reſtored to her recollection, and ſaw that ſhe ſhed tears of gratitude to heaven, and to him, as the immediate inſtrument of her deliverance; and when he afterwards learned from the good houſekeeper that ſhe was in bed, had taken ſome refreſhment, and ſeemed quite calm and eaſy, he began to feel that ſome attention was neceſſary to himſelf; he therefore took off his coat, and ſummoned his faithful Bat to inſpect his wound, which the coldneſs of the night had prevented from bleeding ſo exceſſively as it would otherwiſe have done.

Bat,

Bat, who was no unſkilful ſurgeon, having attended as Doctor's ſervant in two engagements, declared, after a ſlight examination, that he felt the bullet very plain on the other ſide of the arm, through which it had paſſed without touching the bone.—" Cut it out then," cried his maſter; " cut away, my good fellow, and let's have done with it, for I have no time to nurſe it; and if I ſend for one of your regular-bred land doctors, they'll make a job of it perhaps."—Bat, with the moſt perfect *ſang-froid*, did as he was bid. Mrs. Gerkin, the houſekeeper, was then called, who, with a thouſand lack-a-days! and goodneſſes, and oh! dears! applied ſuch remedies to the wound as her limited knowledge of ſuch matters made her

believe

believe would the moſt readily heal it; and Arnold, whoſe life had within a few hours obtained in his eſtimation a greater value than he had ever ſet on it before, was prudent enough to forbear taking any thing ſtronger than a little whey; after which he retired to the bed that was always reſerved for him, but not to ſleep: the ſtrange adventure of the night, and the joy of having ſaved his Azemia, prevented him much more than the pain of his wound from cloſing his eyes till day-break; when, overcome with fatigue, he ſunk into temporary forgetfulneſs, but ſoon ſtarted from it; and as a confuſed remembrance of what had paſſed recurred to him, he eagerly aſked himſelf if it was not

all

all a dream, till the pain his arm gave him aſſured him of its reality, and for doing ſo the ſevereſt pain he could have endured would have been welcome.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

"None but the Brave deſerve the Fair."

IMPATIENT to enquire after Azemia, on whom he felt that his happineſs more than ever depended; Arnold was at her door at eight o'clock, and learned from the woman who had ſat by her bed-ſide, that ſhe had for ſome hours ſlept calmly, and had awaked greatly refreſhed. Made happy by ſo favourable an account, Arnold then haſtened

to

to his uncle, whom he found already in his garden. The good man, who had never felt to excefs, and had long fince ceafed to feel the paffions that now agitated the bofom of his nephew, was a good deal difturbed by the vehemence of his manner, as well as by the extreme paleneſs of his countenance. To make him eafy as to the latter, Arnold told him of his wound, affuring him at the fame time it would not be of the leaft confequence. Mr. Winyard, who loved his nephew more than any other perfon on earth, though he had four children of his own, was greatly alarmed, and infifted upon fending for the beft medical advice in the neighbourhood. Arnold, finding all oppofition in vain, confented, and the more readily, becaufe he thought it highly neceffary that the ftate of Azemia's

mia's health, after ſo great a ſhock as ſhe had received the preceding evening, ſhould be attended to.

Azemia, however, had already recovered herſelf much more than could have been expected. Towards afternoon ſhe was able to riſe; and being accommodated with a change of clothes by the houſekeeper (for Mr. Winyard's daughter was married, and had left him ſome years), ſhe dreſſed herſelf; and her native, untaught politeneſs told her that ſhe could not too ſoon thank her preſent benefactors, nor inform her firſt benefactreſs of what was become of her.

A meſſage, deſiring to ſee them, brought Arnold and his uncle to her. If he had

thought

thought her moſt lovely in the dreſs of her country, when he firſt ſaw her in the early bloom of youthful beauty, ſhe ſtruck him now as being even more beautiful and intereſting. The ruſtic ſimplicity of dreſs ſhe wore, (that of a grave old ſervant), her paleneſs, her languor, and the words, imperfect yet forcible, in which ſhe attempted to expreſs the grateful feelings of her heart, were all ſo many charms that ſerved to rivet more ſtrongly than ever the fetters that the enamoured ſailor had worn from the firſt day of their meeting.

Eager to know by what ſtrange accident ſhe had been ſo accompanied when he ſo fortunately met her in the foreſt, he deſired Azemia to explain to him what had happened to her ſince they laſt

met. Azemia endeavouring to collect at once English and courage enough to go through it, though she had herself but little idea of the real causes that had influenced her various removals, Arnold perfectly understood them from her artless description of the persons she had been among. His indignation was particularly excited against the old Captain, her first captor, who had, he thought, most basely and ungenerously sold her to some man of rank, by means of the woman with whom she had been placed. Her last escape, however, which he thought might possibly be from the same man who had thus at first purchased her, shocked him still more, and made him apprehensive for her future safety. But towards Mrs. Blandford he felt the livelieſt gratitude; and upon Azemia's mentioning

mentioning how much ſhe wiſhed that excellent friend to know ſhe was in ſafety, Arnold, knowing ſhe would be perfectly ſecure in the protection of his uncle, expreſſed an eager deſire to go to her himſelf. But this his uncle abſolutely forbade; for, though the diſtance acroſs the country was not more than thirty miles, his recent wound made even ſo ſhort a journey extremely imprudent.

Honeſt Bat was, however, immediately diſpatched, and directed to take a man or two with him from the neareſt village, to the ſcene of their combat with the poachers, and enquire into the fate of the wretch whom they had left wounded on the ground.

No traces of him could be found; and it ſeemed certain that, being leſs ſeverely hurt than they had imagined, he had found means to looſen his hands, and eſcape to ſome hiding-place amid the thickets of the foreſt. Bat therefore, vowing vengeance againſt this felon if ever he met with him again, proceeded to the houſe of Mrs. Blandford with a letter from Charles Arnold.

That excellent woman had ſuffered ſo much uneaſineſs during the three weeks ſince Azemia had been unaccountably betrayed from her protection, that ſhe was now too ill to have left her home on any occaſion leſs intereſting than that of ſeeing and having her lovely ward reſtored to her.—She now he-

ſitated

ſitated only till the next day. On account of the danger of travelling late the road ſhe was to go, ſhe ſet out attended by two ſervants armed, beſides Bat, who, as he led the way through the foreſt, pointed, with ſome degree of triumph, to that part of it where he and his maſter had put to flight and diſcomfited three ſtouter men than themſelves.

While at Cherbury (which was the name of Mrs. Winyard's houſe), Azemia and Arnold waited the return of the meſſenger ſent to Mrs. Blandford. Arnold, delighted that Azemia could now underſtand him, made the beſt uſe of his time to expreſs to her the ſentiments he felt for her. Azemia, who had never ſeen any human creatures

that ſhe loved, ſince her reſidence in England, but Mrs. Blandford and Arnold, had no more notion of diſguiſing her affection for one of them than for the other: ſhe therefore frankly told him, that, attached to him both by choice and by gratitude, ſhe deſired him to be aſſured, that ſhe wiſhed for no happier deſtiny than to be united to him according to the laws of his country, and to ſhew him, through life, the gratitude and tenderneſs of her heart.

Her ignorance of the modes and manners of a country where every circumſtance differed ſo materially from her own, made her look forward to their future union without any of thoſe anxieties that clouded the happineſs of Charles Arnold.

Unfortunately

Unfortunately left dependent on his mother, he had been but too well convinced, by many preceding inſtances, that his ſucceſſion to his father's property was not only diſtant, but doubtful; and all his fears as to his mother's intentions were turned into certainties, when he learned, as he had lately done, that the good lady had married an Iriſh Lieutenant of Dragoons, whom ſhe had met with at a card party, where he had arreſted the attention of the company by relating his dangers and exploits during the laſt campaign.

" She lov'd him for the dangers he had paſs'd;
" And he lov'd her that ſhe did pity him."

As ſhe did not think it neceſſary to communicate theſe her matrimonial intentions to her ſon, he had only heard

of it, by chance, on coming on ſhore for a fortnight's leave of abſence; and was haſtening to conſult his uncle on this unpropitious intelligence, when he ſo happily met Azemia in the moment of her extreme diſtreſs.

What had then paſſed drove every thing out of his head; but now he was at once under the painful neceſſity of relating to Mr. Wynward what had happened, and to liſten to the exclamations he very warmly, though naturally enough, uttered, on the folly, the inconſequence, the cruelty of women.— "And what," ſaid Charles Arnold to himſelf, "what will he think of that "of men, if I tell him that I intend, when I have not a penny on earth but the income of a Lieutenant,

and

and about two hundred pounds in prize-money, to marry Azemia? He will never hear of it: yet to relinquish her I feel to be impossible.—I dare not, however, now venture to speak of it."

The arrival of Mrs. Blandford was a comfort to Azemia beyond all she had ever felt; and her benefactress, listening to a detail of all she had suffered, could never be enough thankful to Heaven, that had so miraculously directed her first acquaintance in England to her rescue in a moment of such extreme peril.

It was difficult for the coldest-hearted person to be long with Charles Arnold without loving him. The sweetness of his temper moderating the ardour of his

ſpirits, and the manly good-nature which marked his character, particularly endeared him to Mrs. Blandford; and after two or three days, when Azemia was ſo far recovered as to make her protectreſs ſuppoſe ſhe might undertake the journey home, Arnold at length acquired courage to tell her (what ſhe was well aware of before) that he was diſtractedly in love with Azemia, and wiſhed, notwithſtanding the ſlenderneſs, or rather nothingneſs, of his fortune, to marry her.—Obſerving that Mrs. Blandford liſtened to him without any marks of diſpleaſure, he proceeded with more courage to repreſent that her beauty, her youth, and the ſingular and unfortunate circumſtance of her belonging to nobody, would occaſion her to be continually expoſed, even under Mrs.

Blandford's

Blandford's protection, to dangers of the ſame nature as that ſhe had already eſcaped: in ſhort, he pleaded ſo well, and the generous nature of Mrs. Blandford ſo well diſpoſed her to admit his arguments, that, after hearing what were his proſpects (wherein he related ſimply the truth), ſhe told him, that though the principal part of her income was for life, ſince ſhe had now no children, ſhe had a ſum of about four thouſand pounds in the funds, which it had always been her intention to give to Azemia, ſince ſhe had no relations who either wanted or deſerved it. This, therefore, ſhe would immediately ſettle upon her; and till preferment in his profeſſion, or ſome other lucky chance, gave him greater affluence, Azemia ſhould continue to live with her, where he alſo ſhould

always find a home whenever he was on ſhore.

With a heart overflowing with joy and gratitude, Arnold then flew to his uncle, and eagerly communicated this unexpected proſpect of happineſs.—Mr. Winyard, who was delighted with his viſitors, and already conſidered Azemia as his daughter, told him, that, though he had three ſons and a daughter of his own, they being all provided for, he had, theſe laſt two or three years, been laying by a little fund for the nephew he loved.—"I have ſcraped together about fifteen hundred pounds, my dear boy," ſaid he: "I give it you rather before my death than after, that I may be repaid by ſeeing you enjoy it. Marry the woman you love, be as good a lad

as

as you have hitherto been, and never doubt but you will do well."

Parties being thus agreed, no unneceſſary delay was created; and in leſs than a month from her fortunate reſcue Azemia returned to the houſe of Mrs. Blandford as the wife of Charles Arnold.—He was ſoon obliged to leave her, to return to the duties of his profeſſion; in which he ſoon after ſo eminently ſignalized himſelf, that he paſſed rapidly through the intermediate ſteps, and obtained a ſhip.

His frequent abſences were the only circumſtances that gave an alloy to the happineſs he enjoyed with Azemia; and while Mrs. Blandford and Mr. Winyard had the ſatisfaction to contemplate,

as

as their own work, the felicity of these deserving young people, I take leave of my readers with this agreeable impression on their minds, and heartily hope that many of them have met with such good folks as these last. I cannot say I have yet been so fortunate myself; but if I do not alarm my amiable young countrymen too much by thus appearing in the character of a writing lady, I do not despair of succeeding so well in my literary career as to make a pretty little addition to my fortune; with which (if it did not look too much like advertising for a husband), I would intimate, that I should be superlatively blessed to contribute to the happiness of some tender, yet sensible youth, who, could be content with rural felicity in an elegant cottage in Wales (for Belle-

grove,

grove Priory is the inheritance of my elder brother); which cottage, with the profits of this work, I propose to fit up in the most elegant style—and doubt not but, in time, it may humbly emulate that of the justly celebrated Llangollen.

TO THE

REVIEWERS OF ALL THE REVIEWS; ALL THE MAGAZINES;

AND

ALL THE NEWSPAPERS.

GENTLEMEN,

FROM being in habits of reading for many years your monthly lucubrations, to an infirm female relation who formerly lived in the literary world, I have ever ſince I was thirteen been inſpired with the moſt ardent ambition to ſee myſelf ſpoken of favourably in every one of your pages, replete as they are with

diſcriminating

diſcriminating knowledge and refined taſte. I know, gentlemen, your chaſte impartiality, and am well aware, that you never ſuffer either the rank or ſituation of an author to influence you: you never give undeſerved praiſe to any work, becauſe you are perſonally acquainted with the writer; or ſpeak well of a performance utterly contemptible, becauſe your Review is edited by the publiſher of ſuch performance. Party, which has ſo much effect in this our beloved country, that it ſometimes ſets the father at enmity with his ſon, and divides the brethren of the ſame houſe, never, I know, induces any of you to make the ſmalleſt variation in your rectitude. In a word, gentlemen, as I know nothing ſo deſtructive to a young author as your diſapprobation, ſo I feel that

your

your commendation is the acme of my aſpiring hopes.

As a young artiſt ſtudies with indefatigable perſeverance the moſt celebrated models in ſculpture or painting; ſo I, to avoid the common error of becoming a Manneriſt, and to attain the felicity of

"Tranſplanting one by one into my work
"Their ſeveral beauties, till I ſhine like them,"

have ſtudied with unwearied attention *all* the moſt approved novels of this preſent as well as the paſt day. You will not think me a plagiariſt, when I declare that I have taken from the immortal Fielding, in one chapter, almoſt word for word; and truſt I am, at leaſt, in that paſſage, as *much* like him as *he* was

to

to Cervantes. If I have omitted the incomparable Richardſon, it was becauſe my narrow limits would not allow me to deſcribe, with his exquiſite minuteneſs, the Cedar parlour, and Grandmama's great chair; nor could I, by any means, though my Heroine weeps now and then, continue to bring my Hero to wipe her eyes *with her own handkerchief*, and *bow* upon her hand.

To attain the maſculine force and ſtrong colouring of the great Dramatiſt and Noveliſt of the preſent day, Mr. Cumberland, was quite beyond my ſlender attainment; but I have paid a due tribute to his taſte, ſagacity, and knowledge of *womankind*. Thrown at a great diſtance from the moſt engaging models among my own ſex, I yet look up with more

more confidence to attain, at ſome future day, a ſeat on that point of Parnaſſus where they hold ſuch eminent rank. In this hope I have ſometimes aſſumed the ſtately ſtep with which the pupils of the Burney ſchool follow in *ſolemn*, yet *inadequate* march, *their inimitable leader*. *This*, however, I have attempted in *ſtyle* only. I have not ſeen enough of the world to ſketch even in the way of a ſcholar, ſuch admirable characters. With leſs diffidence, though ſtill with great humility, I have ventured with ſhuddering feet into the World of Spirits, in modeſt emulation of the ſoul-petrifying Ratcliffe—but, alas!

"Within that circle none dare walk but ſhe."

Even if I *had* ever had the fortune to ſee a *real natural ghoſt*, I could never deſcribe

deſcribe it with half the terrific apparatus that fair Magician can conjure up in ſome dozen or two of pages, interſperſed with convents, arches, pillars, cypreſſes, and banditti-bearing cliffs, beetling over yawning and ſepulchral caverns. Her pictures,

"Dark as Pouſſin, and as Salvator wild,"

can only be faintly copied;—to rival them is impoſſible.—I own I do *not* feel quite ſo diſheartened, when I try at making ſomething like the luminous page of Mrs. Mary Robinſon: I even flatter myſelf that I have, in more than one inſtance, caught the *air of probability* ſo remarkable in her delectable hiſtories, as well as her glowing deſcription and applicable metaphors.

To

To Mrs. Gunning's Novels, and those of her amiable daughter, I owe all in these little volumes that pretends to draw the characters and manners of high life. With due humility and trepidation I have seized the mimic pencil: I feel that I cannot wield it with their happy freedom and felicity—*faut d'usage.*

To be insensible to the universal knowledge of the accomplished *Italian Traveller*, the attractive friend of *the Leviathan of Literature*, would be to want taste enough to value the glory of my sex. But the extensive erudition of that lady, grasping at all that literature and science can give; her elegant desultory gaiety; her elaborate research; her acute remarks; her erudite judgment;

ment; and, above all, her political candour, are as much above *my* praiſe as ſuperior to *my* attainment.

From the parterres of Miſs Lee, Mrs. Inchbald, and Mrs. Smith, I have culled here and there a flower; and I ſhould have enlarged my bouquet with buds and bloſſoms of other very agreeable writers, of whom I could make (like Mr. Pratt) a very reſpectable liſt, if I could have induced my publiſher to have allowed my work to be enlarged to what I intended it, viz. ſix *very* large volumes. He aſſured me that it was too much for a *debut*; that my head was not yet furniſhed enough to ſupply ſo capital a work with ſtory, ſcenery, incident, character, dialogue, reflection, and all the various articles

neceſſary

neceſſary for an Epic in proſe. I do not, however, deſpair (if you, Gentlemen, light me on my way up to the ſummit of Fame) of producing hereafter, *ſeven very large volumes* thickly printed, duly interſperſed with pieces of poetry, ſuperior to what I have now ſown with extreme diffidence in the preſent volumes—Volumes, Gentlemen, which I offer you as my firſt imitative Eſſay—And (to finiſh this ſentence in the *manner* of the *ſweetly*, the *ſoftly ſuſceptible author of the meek and mild novel of "Julia,"*) I have, in this work, like the mocking-bird of the American wilderneſs, caught with emulative ambition the dulcet notes of the harmonious choriſters around me: the attempt is exhilarating to the youthful fancy; and ſhe who at once attends to admonition,

and attempts excellence, though ſhe may never equal the delicious *trills* of the Poet's beloved nightingale, may yet ſoothe the ear of the candid liſtener; and, if ſhe does not ſoar into the empyrean with the lark, may at leaſt enliven the hawthorn with the finch, or the orchard with the linnet!

Ah! Gentlemen Reviewers! Critics! by what name ſoe'er ye love to be invoked, do not cruſh my ambition in the ſhell; let it unfold, and, like the little Nautilus, float buoyant on the ſea of public favour; be your animating *puffs* extended as well to me as to others of my ſiſter Hiſtorians—Suffer me to

"Enjoy the triumph, and partake the gale."

To change the metaphor—do not blight with ungenial gales theſe efforts of budding

ding genius—drive them not back into their *hybernacle*, by the chilling frosts of Criticisms. If I have faults, ye will tenderly hint at them—if I have *merit*, praise it; but I know you will, all of you, Gentlemen Reviewers by profession! for some of you are my particular friends, others are old acquaintances of my dear Grandmama, (who, good old Lady, used now and then to *do* an article herself, particularly in the British Critic)—To all of you I will send copies of my work.

Besides, ye are so tender-hearted, that ye will consider the tremors, the trembling breathless solicitude of a young beginner.—With what eagerness shall I, after my work is published, run over the list of "*Contents*" on your blue co-

vers! and when, Oh! moment of trepidation! "Jenks's Azemia" meets my eye, with what impatience ſhall I tear open the important page on which the fate of my literary life depends!

Suffer me to enjoy, by anticipation, the praiſes I am ſure you will give me.—Seven or eight months, perhaps, may firſt elapſe, and my work may be in a third or fourth edition, before I ſhall read thus in

THE MONTHLY REVIEW.

"Modern Noveliſts may be ſaid to poſſeſs "their principal ſhare of excellence in an artful "conſtruction of their *fables*. That a happy "combination of ſtory is neceſſary we do not "attempt to deny, but we think many other "circumſtances equally ſo: thus character is undoubtedly

" undoubtedly one of the firſt requiſites. In this
" we know not whether the fair Authoreſs of
" Azemia has not failed. Captain Wapping-
" ſhot is a mere ſketch, caricatured on ſome of
" the various Sea Characters ably delineated
" by Mr. Cumberland; but, upon the whole,
" this young lady's drawing is ſufficiently
" correct: the ſentiments ſhe puts into the
" mouths of ſome of her characters are ap-
" propriate and natural;—the poetry inter-
" ſperſed in theſe little volumes is lively and
" agreeable. We are ſorry our limits do not
" allow us to gratify our readers with a ſpe-
" cimen."

Thank ye, Gentlemen, a thouſand times: this diſcriminating, calm praiſe is juſt that temperate medium to rear a nurſling of the Muſes.

Now, then, ye ſterner, but not leſs ſagacious perſonages, who oblige the world with

THE CRITICAL REVIEW.

"We are here preſented with the firſt "eſſay of a very young lady, who, it muſt be "allowed, gives ſome proofs of not being "totally deſtitute of genius. We diſapprove, "however, of the epiſode introduced at the "end of the firſt volume: ſuch tales are cal-"culated to impreſs terror on young minds, "and multiply, by imaginary evils, the real "evils of life; whereas the buſineſs of the "Noveliſt ſhould be to recommend fortitude "and prudent reſolution. We think this "lady's verſe, in many inſtances, better than "her proſe:—the ſentiments ſhe expreſſes, as "to the condition of the poor *under exiſting* "*circumſtances*, do honour to her heart. We

"have

"have no doubt but that a little more expe-
"rience in writing (which we think ſhe will
"do well to endeavour at acquiring) will
"render this young lady's writing no con-
"temptible addition to the *firſt* rank of the
"*ſecond claſs of Modern Novels*:—at preſent
"we cannot place her higher."

Gentlemen, I acknowledge ye have dealt honourably by me, and I will take your advice; I will acquire experience as faſt as poſſible.——Now for

THE ANALYTICAL.

To be analyſed, and ſo ſeverely too! Heavens! here *are* authors who would almoſt prefer annihilation—but I am of

better heart. Perhaps theſe Gentlemen may have no objection to ghoſts, or rather to the ſhadows of ſhades.—*Voyons.*

" This lady, who is, by her own account, " a novice in the line of Novel-writing, ſeems " to poſſeſs a ſmall ſhare of that uncommon " talent for exhibiting, with pictureſque " touches of genius, the vague and horrid " ſhapes which imagination bodies forth, that " has rendered another lady ſo deſervedly ce- " lebrated. Her mode of telling the ſtory " of ' another Blue Beard,' reminded us, " *faintly*, of Mrs. Ratcliffe. The nature of " the work obliges us to digeſt improbabili- " ties, of which there are ſeveral ſtriking " inſtances in the progreſs of the ſtory, as well " as in the before-mentioned epiſode. We " cannot help wiſhing, in regard to the latter, " that ſhe had accounted for the ſupernatural " appearances in the *natural* and *probable* man- " ner of her juſtly-celebrated prototype. As it

" is,

" is, we are obliged to have recourſe to an-
" cient legends, relative to *immaterialiſm*,
" which are *entirely exploded*, and which *we*
" *are ſorry to ſee revived in any book of rational*
" *entertainment*.

" In general we approve of this writer's
" ſentiments; of which the following is no
" unfavourable ſpecimen."

Here follows a quotation.——And, again:

" Of our Author's deſcriptive powers we
" ſhall take the ſcene in volume the firſt, im-
" mediately after the departure of her lover:
" of the Poetry, the lines from 'the For-
" ficularis to her Love,' are the beſt."

I make my courteſy to you alſo, Gentlemen, and then, with a ſort of tender

confidence,

confidence, as a daughter, or a ward, I addreſs myſelf to *you*, ye *Britiſh Critics*—my dear Grandmama's old worthy friends. Methinks I ſee ye, venerable arbiters of taſte! I ſee ye of both ſexes (as my friend, Lady Harriet, ſays ye are of each, ſome male and ſome female, and truly I believe it)—I ſee ye, in *deep divan*, ſitting with ſolemnity on my work:—your ſecretary takes his pen—a reſpectable matron—for with you, as the age of chivalry ſtill exiſts, it is always "*Places aux Dames*"—I ſee her, (her cap a little on one ſide by accident, which adds to the ſagacity of her countenance) and I hear her dictating thus:—

"We congratulate the Novel-reading world "on the acquiſition of the fair Author of this pleaſing

"pleasing work, as an amiable labourer in the "vineyard. She is, undoubtedly, a young "lady of the first promise; and, if our *illus-* "*trious Premier* were not superior to all com- "parison, as he is exalted above all praise, "we should have a slight degree of envy at his "being honoured with such a panegyrist: "but his *eximious* merit deserves that all the "talents of the British nation should be united "in loud acclaim."

The venerable Lady here resigns her dictatorship to a Reverend Divine.

"If it were possible to make any objection "to a work, the beauties of which would "'strike us blind' to its defects, were they "more numerous, we might *just hint*, that "Miss Jenks should have been more minute "in her description of Azemia's baptism; "whether *the fees* for that sacred ceremony "were duly paid, *who were the sponsors*, and

"in

" in what *parish* the fair creature, *thus rescued* " *from Mahometism, was registered:* the pow- " ers of our Authoress would have shone, in " describing *the dinner* given, and the emotions " of the beauteous convert *on that* occasion."

Here the man of the church resigns his place, and is succeeded by a *Lay Brother*, who holds a comfortable sinecure under Government.—This sage Reviewer observes:

" If we were disposed to cavil at any thing " in a book where there is so much right, " and as it ought to be, *we* might hint that " there are *some* passages, which the evil dis- " posed might construe into reflections on the " manners of the upper ranks of society—a " style which, at this period, should by no " means be admitted by any lover of good " order; nor can *we*, with all our esteem for " Miss Jenks (with whose honourable family

" we

" we have long been connected), help advising
" her never to make the personages of her
" history (even when speaking in character)
" retail common-place, we might almost say,
" Jacobinical common-place, on the condi-
" tion of the poor.—To our certain knowledge
" *no ground for any such remark does exist*, or
" *can exist*, under the present *happy*, *fortunate*,
" *flourishing*, and *glorious state of this country*.

" We were extremely amused with the
" Charades, though we could discover *le mot*
" of the *first* only, which we had indeed before
" heard accidentally.—We will not deprive
" our readers of the pleasure of guessing at the
" sense of this very ingenious effort of elegant
" female talent."

THE END.

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